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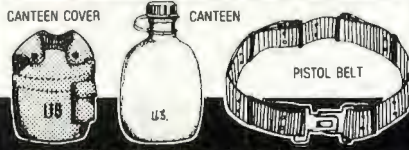
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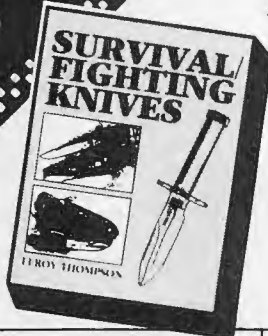
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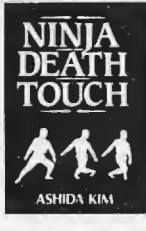
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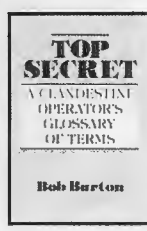
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COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

I have learned a lot in all my years of soldiering. Weapons, strategy, leadership — pretty crucial stuff if one plans to make a living of skill at arms. But the thread that binds all this together is the human element, the camaraderie of a shared military experience which — like it or not — makes us a family.

And there's been a feud quietly building in this family that's going to tear our brotherhood a rift unless we air it out right now.

It comes down to this: Some — and I emphasize that word — World War II and Korean veterans have become downright hostile about the attention Vietnam vets are now receiving for their service in South-east Asia.

I've been hearing rumblings to this effect for some time, but I hoped like hell that both sides would come to terms and realize just how senseless and futile the issue really is — and what disastrous effect it can have in the military camp for years to come. Guess I was wrong, because the shouting on both sides of the fence is getting louder.

Let me try to put this thing into some kind of perspective. Older vets who slogged their way through Europe and the Pacific make the point that they fought in a *real* war rather than in a limited "conflict" fought in an obscure country half the size of California. They also say they were in for the duration rather than the 12- or 13-month automatic-rotation tour served by the Vietnam vet. Finally, and I think at the very crux of the matter, they complain that Vietnam vets are too full of self-pity, too self-righteous about their "sacrifice" in 'Nam, too coddled by all and sundry, and in gener-

al are just looking for a free hand-out.

Well, to the first point, you can end up just as dead in a "conflict" as you can in a *real* war. To the second, the troops didn't make that decision — the Pentagon did. And for the last — horseshit. To borrow a movie line, "What we got here is a failure to communicate." And, a failure to understand each other.

What really seems to have slipped through the crack is not so much what we thought about our respective wars, but rather what the American people thought about them. Government propagandists did their best to whip up public fervor in support of World War II with war bonds, Victory gardens and "liberty sausage," and it worked.

We didn't see much of that during Vietnam, did we?

And the Vietnam vets? I won't belabor *their* return to the United States because you've heard it all before. But I will say this: The American public confused the warrior

with the war. After years of neglect and hostility, John Q. Public is finally starting to realize that Vietnam vets were just soldiers doing their job.

Sure, a lot of 'Nam vets bitched and moaned about the treatment they received, and I can't really blame them. Their war didn't end when they left Vietnam. It's been a continual fight ever since just to be accepted as normal human beings rather than stereotyped baby-killers.

So put this BS about "my war was better than yours" to rest and just be thankful that you all came back alive. After all, there are enough people shooting at the military without us shooting at each other. ☒



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COVER: Some military planners are realizing the benefits of cross-country motorcycles on the field of battle. These all-terrain vehicles are fast, maneuverable and reliable, even on the roughest of terrain. SOF brings you the newest innovation from KTM, the Fast Reaction Vehicle (FRV), beginning on page 48. Photo: Alex Erisoty

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NEW AUSTRALIAN AUG...

Sirs:

In the February '85 issue Peter Kokalis did an excellent article on the Steyr AUG. In it he mentions the Australian army trials between the AUG and the M16A2. The trials are now completed and the AUG was the winner. However, there's talk of modifying it for Australian use including: replacing the forward pistol grip with a ventilated hand guard, modifying the magazine well to accept M16-type magazines (ensuring it be compatible with FN Minimi), and changing the safety switch for semiauto only or full auto. I guess changing the trigger could be due to the government's tough restrictions on military weapons ownership. Weapons instructors are probably very nervous about being on the range with recruits who have never fired military weapons.

Dingo
Sydney, Australia

A LOHA CAMOUFLAGE...

Sirs:

In the February '86 issue of SOF ("RENAMO, Winning One in Africa") there is a Renamo soldier pictured wearing colorful elephant camo pants. I was wondering if there was any way I could find a pair of those beauties. I would pay any price.

Tom Moore
Oklahoma City,
Oklahoma

Any ideas, readers?



FLAK



IRA BOMBERS...

Sirs:

Sorry, "Undercover in Northern Ireland," SOF, February '86 bombed out. In his frenzy to disparage the Provos (Provisional Irish Republican Army) Peter Shell Drake dusts off some well-worn (and obvious) anti-Irish themes. In fact, the story could just as easily have been set in any of the other areas of past British colonial oppression.

Gene Sullivan
New York, New York



DEEP, DARK JUNGLE...

Sirs:

Having a background in medical technology and funeral science I thoroughly enjoyed "Bats, Bugs & Blisters" by Mick Doyle (SOF, February '86). Such articles demonstrate why SOF is more than a part of the current Rambomania craze. I eagerly await the next 100 issues.

Lloyd E. Addington
Portland, Oregon

AFFORDABLE FIREARMS...

Sirs:

I was so impressed by Peter Kokalis' article in the December '85 issue on the Taurus PT-92 I went out and purchased one. It's a great gun; accurate, well-made, and the price is great. Plus, it has a lifetime warranty.

John H. Jones Jr.
Macon, Georgia

The Taurus PT-92 pistol represents an excellent value, indeed. And Peter Kokalis intends to continue to test and evaluate pistols and revolvers that offer both quality and value to the consumer, in addition to more exotic items and military small arms not available to the general public.

DISPOSABLE MAGAZINES?...

Sirs:

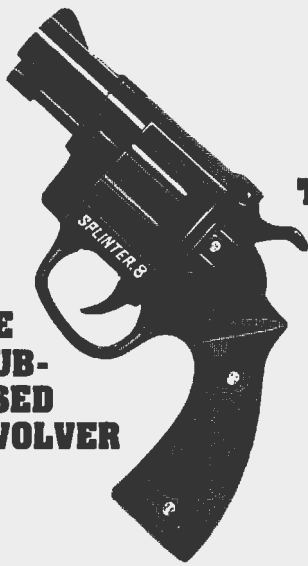
Where can I obtain a metallic magazine for the M11/9mm SMG? I am having no luck with the Zytel magazines I have bought; they all split at the seams after a little use.

Charles A. Huffman
New Castle, Indiana

Sorry, but there's no metal magazine available for the M11/9mm SMG, says Peter Kokalis. Without realizing it, you now own the world's first production series firearm with disposable magazines.

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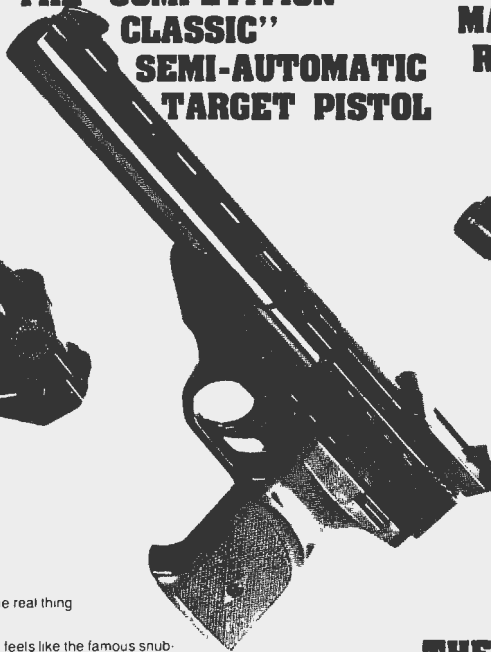
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MEDICAL SUPPORT...

Sirs:

I have found a source of assistance for Refugee Relief International Inc. that your other readers and supporters may be able to tap into. I have, since June 1985, been able to send four boxes of medical samples totaling over 70 pounds to RRII. I would urge other readers of SOF to contact their doctors or nurses and explain the situation and request that they save their samples for you instead of flushing them down the toilet. When they call you, pick the items up promptly and thank them. I'm preparing another box this week.

Robert J.

Dohrman
Los Angeles,
California

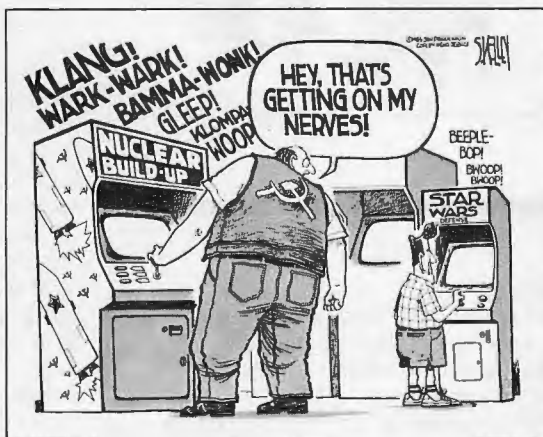
SOF updates Refugee Relief International's most recent MEDCAP mission into Central America on page 80. Thanks to donations from SOF readers our volunteers treated over 1,400 people. We urge everyone with access to surplus medical supplies to donate what they can to Refugee Relief International Inc., c/o SOF, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306.

SWISS ARMY KNIFE...

Sirs:

I think Lynn Thompson must be getting hold of cheap copies of the Swiss Army knife. His experience with blades breaking is definitely not typical of the genuine Victorinox product ("Edged Weapon Arsenal," SOF, February '86). I have been using one for over five years with no problems. After opening countless cans, repairing everything, stripping wire and cutting plastic sheet, nothing has broken or bent and the blades are still extremely sharp.

John Evans
Southampton, United Kingdom



VIDEO HUCKSTERISM...

Sirs:

"Deadly Weapons" (SOF, February '86) was very interesting. It's a shame, however, the author did not mention the obvious breaches of safety and common sense with which the video abounded. Like firing a .44 Magnum at an engine block at point-blank range without taking precautions against the possibility of ricocheting bullet fragments.

I felt the video degenerated into a carnival sideshow about three-quarters of the way through and was capped off by a display of sheer destruction for the sake of destruction. Sixteen sticks of dynamite blowing up a car? C'mon!

Donald L. Cline
North Highlands, California

DEAR COMRADE TERRY...

Sirs:

Regarding Terry Choate's project to dedicate a park in Phoenix to anti-war protestors: I think you might want to reprint Choate's letter so your readers may write their "fan letters" to this low-life scumbag.

Nik-Uhemik
Arc Light Enterprises
Redondo Beach, California

You're absolutely right. Here it is.

"Dear Comrade Nik

Thank you for your letter in support of the Vietnam Victory Memorial to honor those who died opposing (sic) the criminal war against the Vietnamese people. Unlike the memorial for war criminals in Washington, this memorial will honor the true American patriots who died in fighting the fascistic imperialist war-mongers of the right-wing.

We hope to get a part of war criminal McCains' airplane that forms a war memorial in downtown Hanoi for our Vietnam Victory Memorial to remind the conservatives who won the Vietnam war and who is going to win in Central America.

I'M sure you will agree that too much time is wasted on M.I.A. war criminals and not enough on bringing Vietnam-Vets to international war crimes tribunals. If the M.I.A. are dead good riddance (sic), if they are still alive they are paying their debt to society and the Vietnamese people. Many German NAZIs are still missing after all these years because The Soviet Union knows how to deal with anti-communist scum.

WE hope dear comrade you will come and vist (sic) the Vietnam Victory Memorial at Jane Fonda Hero of the Nation Park. April 30 1986 flag raising ceremonies we will be flying the flag of North Vietnam over America for the first time!"

Continued on page 30

NEPOTISM IN SYRIA...

The recent increased Syrian military presence near Israel's border along the Golan Heights is of obvious importance to Syria's President Hafez Assad. One measure of its importance is his choice of a military commander in that AO: General Rifa'at Assad, his brother. The younger Assad's new command was reported in the Israeli press and confirmed by SOF sources in Washington, but there is little agreement about what it means. Certainly it will mean the forward elements of the Syrian military force will remain loyal to President Assad. Tension along that border seems to have eased, at least for the time being.

OMEGA GROUP HOT SHOTS...

The *Soldier of Fortune* Combat Shooting Team turned in a respectable performance for 1985. And with Boulder shoots now sanctioned by the International Practical Shooting Confederation, staffers are set to compete in several qualifying matches this year, vying for over 20 Colorado slots in the 1986 IPSC national and world competition. Organizer Andy Hollar, who is also responsible for IPSC affiliation in SOF's home town, promises increasingly tougher competition. SOF team members who did well in 1985 include: John Metzger, 2nd overall in the B Class; Fritz Borhardt, 1st Place in C Class; J.D. Mayfield, 3rd Place in D Class.

BULLETIN BOARD



IRANIAN SHAKEUP...

Iran's official government daily newspaper, *Kayhan*, has reported that the fundamentalist Islamic republic has a new defense minister. Most notable about the appointment of Colonel Muhammad Hossein Jalali is that he is the first air force officer to hold the job, and the first person who is not a general. It is also interesting that he is a holdover from the Shah's rule who has lived in the West and speaks English. Jalali was born in Babol in northern Iran in 1928. He attended staff and command colleges in Iran and Pakistan and became a communications specialist. After receiving helicopter training in the United States he was placed in command of Iran's former pilot training program in Italy.

When the Shah was overthrown, Jalali commanded the helicopter logistic and transport element at Isfahan Air Force Base. He remained in that post until the Khomeini regime promoted him to base commander. Later he served as base commander at Kerman and as OIC for the Tehran Air Defense District, a post normally held by a general officer. Jalali saw action at the battles of Masha'ad, Bakhtaran, Sanandaj and Marivan. He was decorated for bravery after Iran's unsuccessful Operations Badr and Kheibar in 1983 and '84.

Jalali most likely was selected as a new defense minister because of his background in logistics, maintenance and procurement. It is unlikely his appointment will mean a new emphasis on air power because the Iranian air force has been virtually crippled in the war with Iraq. Whatever else Jalali's appointment may or may not mean, it illustrates Iran's desperate shortage of qualified manpower.

SOVIET INTERFERENCE...

Our own government planners continue to impress SOF editors with their stupidity. Or maybe the penetration of our government by Soviet agents is even worse than imagined. The latest case in point is the new Soviet Embassy in Washington.

While the U.S. Embassy in Moscow is built on some of that city's lowest terrain, the new Soviet Embassy here is built on some of the highest ground in the District of Columbia, an area known as Mount Alto in the exclusive Glover Park neighborhood of northwest Washington. The Soviets were allowed to purchase this property despite numerous complaints from the CIA and FBI that the location provided the Soviets a choice site for electronic surveillance. And now our intelligence agencies aren't the only ones unhappy.

Washington is one of the last major metro areas in this country without cable television. So companies beam microwave signals to dish antennas installed on apartment and townhouse rooftops. Glover Park was a desirable neighborhood because, among other reasons, it has some of the best television reception in Washington. Or it did until the Soviets moved into a new embassy there in December.

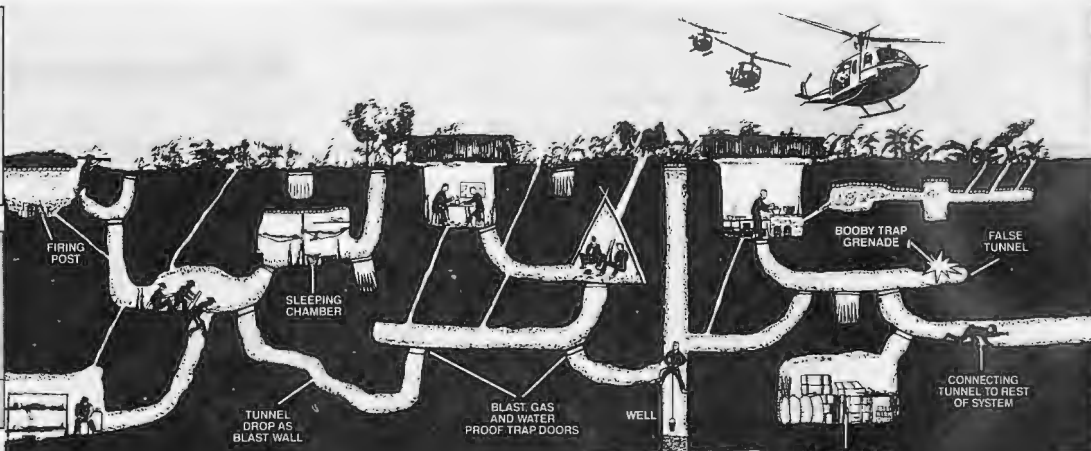
One housewife said her TV reception went from near-perfect to wavy lines, fuzz and roll. When a technician came out to check, he told her the signal was being scrambled. After climbing onto the roof with test equipment, he easily identified the source of the problem, pointing to a nearby tall, white building — the Soviet Embassy.

The Soviets use microwave receivers to intercept hundreds of sensitive phone calls in Washington. They also use laser beam listening devices aimed at government office windows to pick up sensitive conversations through vibrations in the glass. Our government has countered the latter effort by implanting tiny loudspeakers in windows so the commies hear classical music instead of secrets. But TV watchers are out of luck. For now they will just have to do without their daily dose of soap opera pathos.

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IRA-COMBLOC COMPLICITY...

Evidence of the extent to which the IRA works with the PLO and ComBloc nations was obtained by SOF Associate Editor James L. Pate from a confidential source. Pate listened to the tape-recorded interrogation of Halid Salim Abdel Harlim, a PLO veteran captured when the Israeli Defence Force invaded Beirut. Interviewed by Mossad, Israel's intelligence agency, and later by the Central Intelligence Agency, Harlim said he had worked with Marxist subversives from Northern Ireland and Central America while attending terrorist training camps in Simferopol and Rostov, two cities in the southwestern Soviet Union.

Harlim also provided the PLO service record of a Caucasian recruit, which Pate was able to examine. It had a photo of the owner, who was listed as Steven Robert Howe. Howe's rank was listed as *mukatal*, or fighter. The record indicated the 6-foot 3-inch Howe — a blue-eyed blond — was born in Northern Ireland in 1955, and joined Al-Fatah on 24 November 1980. His assigned cover name was listed as Kassem Muhammed Salim and he was assigned to a PLO unit based out of the Rashadiye refugee camp near Tyre in southern Lebanon.

REUNIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS...

The **4th Marine Division Association** and all attached units from World War II will hold their 39th annual reunion at the Red Carpet Airport Hotel in Milwaukee, WI, June 24-28. Write or call **Frank L. Pokrop, 2854 S. 44th St., Milwaukee, WI 53219, (414) 543-3474.**

Eric M. Hammel, author of **CHOSIN: Heroic Ordeal of the Korean War** and **THE ROOT: The Marines in Beirut** is interested in interviewing participants in the siege of Khe Sanh for a new book he's doing. Write or call: **Eric M. Hammel, 1149 Grand Teton, Pacifica, CA 94044, (415) 355-6678.**

The 551st Parachute Infantry Association will hold its 10th annual reunion 18-22 June 1986 at the Grosvenor Inn in San Diego. Contact **Effie Schroeder, 6111 East Montecito St., Fresno, CA 93727, (209) 251-8117.**

If you are interested in helping a Laotian refugee get his family out of communist-controlled Laos, listen up. Hueson Yang, 22, a Hmong tribesman, escaped Laos in 1979, leaving behind his mother and siblings at a refugee camp in the Pon Mung Valley, Laos. They are listed as follows: Mee Lor, female, 55; Yua Yang, female, 15; Vaneng Yang, male, 14; Blia Yang, male, 12; Mai Yang, female, 11; Ger Yang, male, 10; Song Yang, female, 9; Kua Yang, male, 8. The Yangs need financial assistance. For more information, write: **Hueson Yang, Dept. SOF, 2100 Stephens Ave., Missoula, MT 59801.**

The **U.S. Army Ranger Olympics** is a grueling competition testing the physical, mental and technical abilities of two-man Ranger teams. Army ROTC units in Georgia used the Ranger Olympics as a model to find the best Ranger cadets in November competition at Fort Benning. Ken Harris and Chris McManus of Columbus College took first place; Richard Liebel and Richard Wright, also of Columbus, took second place; and Rick Thomason and Jeff Harrison of Georgia Tech came in third. Sponsors hope to expand the annual event to other Southern states and eventually make the competition nationwide.

HONOR ROLL...

El Salvador/Nicaragua Defense Fund contributors: **Richard Sisson, Robert Thomason, "Friends of Carol Gilbert," Robert Bottom, Darrell Locke, Paul J. Knowlton, Paul R. O'Neill, Joao Pessoa, Rickey T. Keller, Brian Christian, Ron Brault, Jeff Nelson, Kenneth Schustereit, William Kaiser, Kerry Whitworth** challenges all sailors from the USS *Saratoga* CV-60 to donate items.

Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund:
Bob L. Taylor, John C. Lerch Jr., Kenneth Schustereit, William Kaiser, Military Surplus Supply Survival Equipment.

VESCO MAKES CUBA UNHAPPY...

Fugitive U.S. financier Robert Vesco, wanted by the FBI for looting a mutual fund of millions of dollars and making illegal campaign contributions to re-elect former President Nixon, apparently has worn out his welcome in his latest refuge from justice, Cuba.

Vesco lived his first fugitive years in the Bahamas, where he allegedly served as a conduit for bribes to top political leaders from major league drug smugglers. An independently appointed royal commission of inquiry into the use of the Bahamas as a drug transshipment point issued a report that led to the resignation of three cabinet members, including Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Dion Hanna. Two more cabinet members who were planning to resign were dismissed before they had the opportunity to do so.

Although Prime Minister Lynden O. Pindling weathered corruption charges and managed to hold on to a narrow margin in Parliament, U.S. pressure on his government forced Vesco to flee to Cuba, where he quickly became a personal financial confidant of Fidel and Raul Castro. It wasn't long before Vesco's name began turning up again, this time assisting the Castro brothers and others in cocaine smuggling operations aimed at raising money for communist insurgents in Central America. This has been substantiated through Justice Department investigations and congressional testimony.

But Washington intelligence sources tell SOF that Vesco's business deals on behalf of the communists have turned sour. He's been placed under house arrest in Cuba, two separate sources confirmed. Ironically, Vesco got in trouble for setting up legitimate business deals with another ComBloc nation, the sources said. A third source with the Security and Exchange Commission told Bulletin Board that Fidel blames Vesco for huge losses on defective equipment such as combines and drill presses bought from Poland. Apparently Vesco now would like to leave Cuba, the sources say, but he is running out of money and Castro is holding him virtually captive. Gee, that's too bad, Bobby. ☒

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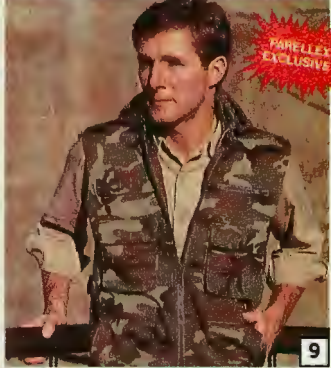


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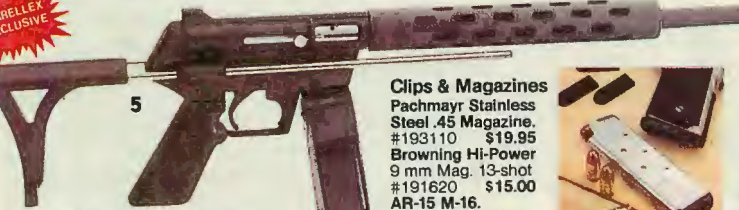
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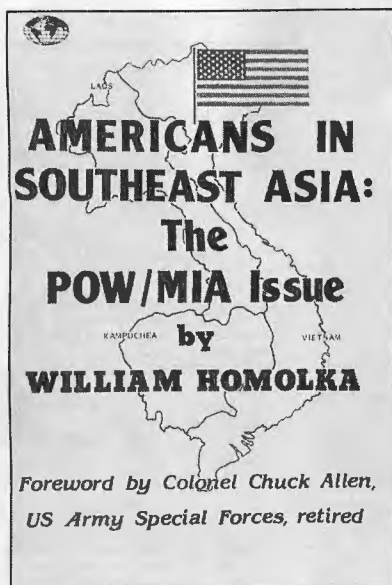
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AMERICANS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: THE POW/MIA ISSUE. By William Homolka. New World Books, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 117, East Elmhurst, NY 11369. \$9.95. Review by James L. Pate.



AMERICA'S collective attention has been focused on the POW/MIA issue ever since the last POW stepped off the plane and onto the tarmac during Operation Homecoming. It seems only natural that there would be a sourcebook that could answer at least some of the questions. But there isn't.

William Homolka has filled that void with this admirable and much-needed effort. It's not fancy, nor does it seek to place blame on anyone. Homolka acknowledges in his introduction that "time and budget factors, as is the case with private research ventures, set the limits." But the book is very current, providing in one place all the fundamental facts one needs for a rational understanding of this topic.

Despite the academic approach, Homolka's "deep moral conviction" on the issue is cited by Colonel Chuck Allen (USA, retired) in the foreword. Allen, SOF's contributing editor on Vietnam Veterans Affairs and editor/publisher of the *National Vietnam Veterans Review*, also cites Homolka's hard work "to present that subject matter in its clearest possible form. . . . At no time [before this book] could I put my hands on a publication that contained the necessary historical background of not only the American but the French encounters with the Vietnamese over the POW/MIA issue," Allen said.

Homolka said he undertook his project after becoming interested in the issue and discovering that there was very little resource material available. "With the exception of *Soldier of For-*

IN REVIEW



tune, which published a special issue in 1983 devoted entirely to the POW/MIA problem, and the *National Vietnam Veterans Review*, which consistently reports on POW/MIA matters, I found no other magazines or newspapers that featured in-depth, researched reporting about Americans still missing in Indochina," he wrote.

Besides putting the issue in an historical context against a backdrop of the French POW/MIA experience in Vietnam, Homolka's book reprints relevant sections of the Geneva Convention and other documents signed by the Vietnamese, including the Paris Peace Accords and the Joint Communiqué Implementing the Agreement and Protocols. A few well-documented cases are presented in which the Vietnamese deny the existence of U.S. POWs which were proven to be captured alive by the communists. Copies of recent government correspondence on POWs and MIAs are included. A list of MIAs is provided with information on their rank, service branch, date of birth, and date and location of incident in which they came to be listed as missing. Miss-

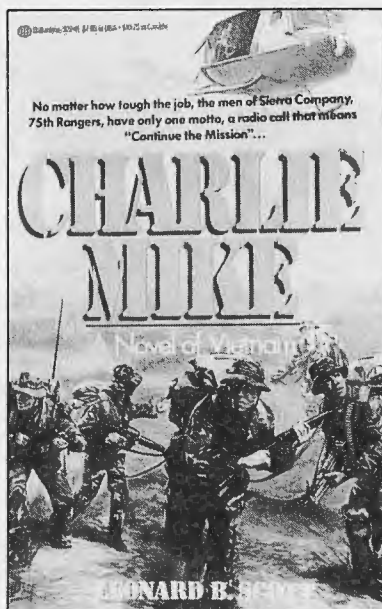
ing civilians unfortunately are not included on this list.

One of the more admirable aspects of Homolka's book is that it provides detailed information on what the average citizen can do toward keeping this issue a high priority. He provides the names, titles and addresses of people who should receive mail on this issue, even providing models that tell the reader exactly what to say when he or she writes. Homolka also provides readers with some creative ideas on how to keep this topic in the forefront of public consciousness with surprisingly little effort.

And that's one of the most important things about Homolka's book, encouraging citizens to get involved on every level. He frankly admits that this history is incomplete, as it is still evolving. "This is not an encouraging record," he quotes one MIA wife as saying, "but it is the record."

"The task now facing us," Homolka writes, "is for all Americans to unite in a concerted effort to resolve this issue. And we must constantly keep one thing in mind. . . . time is running out."

CHARLIE MIKE. By Leonard B. Scott. Ballantine Books, Dept. SOF, 201 East 50th St., New York, NY 1985. 439 pp. \$7.95. Review by Dale Andradé.



ALTHOUGH the accords are signed and the guns are silent, the Vietnam War is far from over. Scan the proliferation of fiction based on the experiences of men and women who were caught up in America's longest war and there can be little doubt this is true.

Leonard B. Scott is yet another of the Vietnam War's wandering souls. He's not willing to give up the war and concentrate on the future, an understandable sentiment considering past personal commitment: Scott was a decorated platoon leader in Vietnam and a genuine lifer. The frustration and anger of fighting a war under unrealistic constraints has always grated on Scott, and he felt the best release would come through the printed page. So in a sense he's still fighting the war, but this time with a pen.

Vietnam went wrong, but it's not because the soldiers wouldn't fight. The grunts in Scott's army fought it the way they were taught and they did a

Continued on page 100

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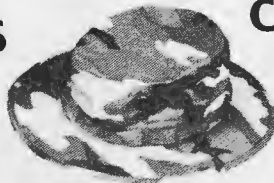
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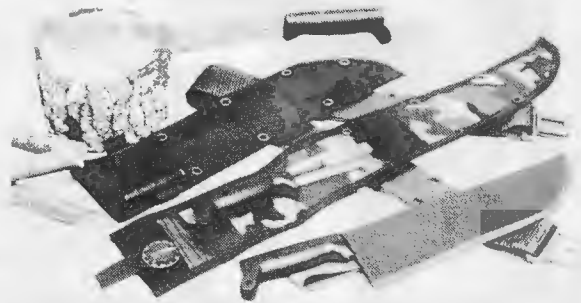
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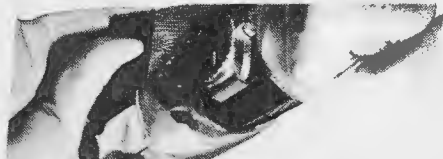
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The samurai were best known for the two swords (daisho) carried in their belts, but they also used a variety of shorter blades for everything from committing suicide (seppuku) to badges of rank. Average American knife buyers were introduced to the Japanese blade tradition with Cold Steel's Tanto. Other manufacturers were quick to jump on the bandwagon and most copied Cold Steel's work right down to the tiniest detail.

Al Mar took a different path. Well-known for his quality blades, Al decided to come up with a knife based on the time-honored Japanese tradition without copying the plethora of tanto look-alikes. Al's final product came off the drawing board and into production as a fine example of modern knife-making technology skillfully blended with the clean lines straight out of Japan's martial past.

Al Mar has taken another step away from the standard tanto stigma. He gave his knife a different name — tanken. In Japanese, tanto and tanken both translate as dagger, but in practice the tanto is more of a short sword while the tanken is a small utility knife in the Western sense of the term. And that's what Al designed his blade to be, a utility knife. Al makes no claims that this is a fighter — it's too small. With a 9-inch overall length, the blade is only 5 inches, too short for fighting,

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The utility tanken is a study in simplicity. The dark paka wood handle provides a firm grip, the blade is made of 440A steel — hard enough to hold an edge, but not so hard that it becomes an all-day chore to sharpen. Al's knife is

cheaper than most of the competition: At \$80.00 it belongs in every knife enthusiast's collection. For more information write: Al Mar Knives, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 1626, 5755 S.W. Jean Rd., Suite 101, Lake Oswego, OR 97034. Phone: (503) 635-9229.

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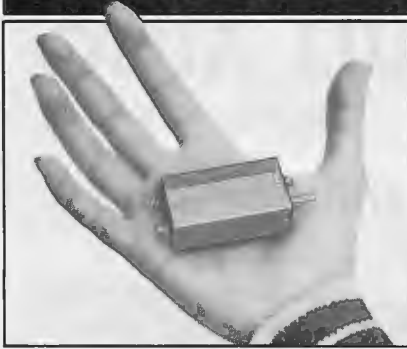
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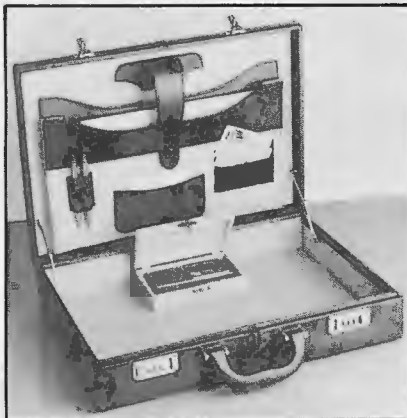
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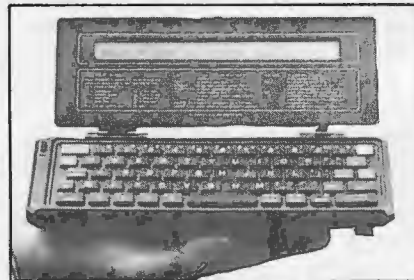
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HEADSPACE. Few U.S. Army grunts know what this means. Tell them that it's the distance from the breech face to the area of the chamber that prevents further forward movement of the cartridge case as the gun is fired and they'll look at you in bewilderment. Tell them that for rimless cases headspace is measured from the breech face to a specific point on the chamber's shoulder, and they'll think you're a magician.

Ma Deuce is fired infrequently in today's Army. But on the few occasions when it *is* drawn off the armory racks, the odds are high someone will blow off the top cover because he didn't know how to adjust the headspace.

When John Moses Browning began designing his .30 and .50 caliber machine guns, manufacturing standards were not what they are today. Components all too often suffered from tolerance build-up that would have required barrels and other parts to be hand-fitted and serial numbered to a specific gun. By providing his machine guns with adjustable headspace, Browning circumvented such a nuisance and permitted any spare barrel to be fired on any gun. In addition, compensation can be made for locking block wear by this feature.

Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machinery dominates today's small arms arsenals. Tolerance specifications that were unheard of in Browning's time are now commonplace minimum industry standards. Recognizing that the adjustable headspace feature has itself turned into a nuisance, FN (Fabrique Nationale Herstal S.A., Branche Defense et Securite, B-4400, Herstal, Belgium) has stepped forward with an admirable solution. Their .50 cal. Browning M2HB-QCB offers a quick-change barrel with fixed headspace. Just set the cocking handle to the rear, insert the barrel into the sleeve and rotate the barrel to its stop. Armies wishing to upgrade to this configuration can purchase a kit from FN to retrofit guns in current inventory. The kit consists of a barrel, barrel extension, breech lock, shim for the barrel support sleeve, barrel support sleeve and accelerator.

The Norwegian 12.7mm NM140 multipurpose ammunition has breathed new life into the old warhorse and the U.S. Armed Forces would be well-advised to examine the FN M2HB-QCB conversion closely.

.45 ACP and Slower UZIs

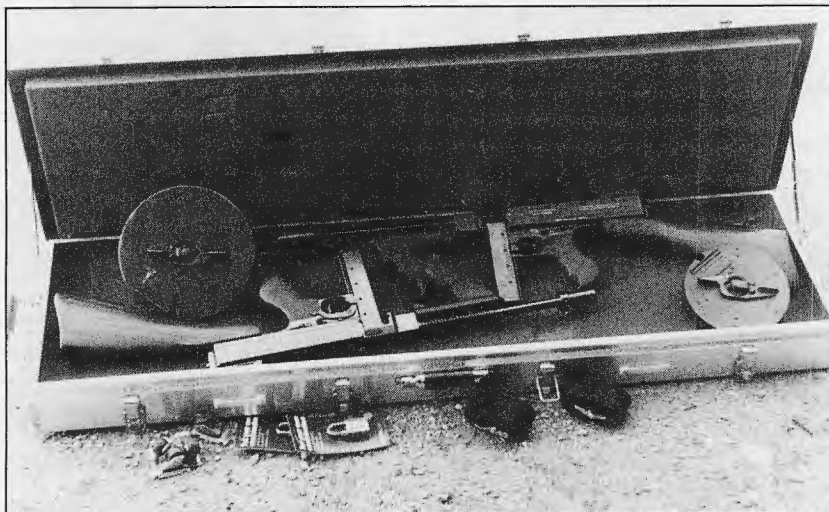
The Mini-UZI has not exactly been an unmitigated success, having been adopted by no one of consequence. Its principal defect has been a cyclic rate in the MAC range (over 1,200 rpm). In an effort to moderate this undesirable trait, Israel Military Industries (IMI) has



FULL AUTO

by Peter G. Kokalis

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introduced a new bolt for the Mini-UZI which contains tungsten heavy-metal inserts that increase the bolt's mass by another 12 ounces and slow the gun's cyclic rate to 950 rpm. Another alternative is a new striker-fired closed-bolt system which reduces the cyclic rate to 900 rpm and should increase first round hit probability.

Attempting to interject a new surge in sales of the original UZI submachine gun, IMI has also announced the development of a .45 ACP conversion kit. The kit consists of a new barrel, bolt and magazine. Unfortunately, the UZI's magazine well will not accommodate a staggered box magazine in caliber .45. Thus the capacity of the magazine I examined was only 16 rounds. However, if the .45 ACP concept proves interesting to end users, an increased capacity magazine which flares out below the magazine well — somewhat in the manner of the 50-rd. Swedish Suomi magazine — could be designed and produced quickly.

The UZI pistol has been fitted with a folding-stock, selective-fire capability with a cyclic rate of 1,200 rpm and designated as the Micro-UZI. Unless they also install a burst control, they better de-tune this bullet hose as well.

Those with a need for more information on either of these two developments should contact Action Arms Ltd. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 9573, Philadelphia, PA 19124).

G3 Folding Stock

Choate's DuPont Zytel stocks are legendary. Garth Choate can transform any weapon — from a Ruger 10/22 to a riot gun — into a Buck Rogers ray gun. Far more conventional in appearance but equally interesting is his latest product, a folding stock for the Heckler & Koch G3/HK-91 rifle. Instead of retracting, the Choate stock folds to the right on an all-steel locking mechanism. Skeletonized, you can still reach the magazine release button with the stock folded. Best of all is the price, which at \$79.95 is half that of H&K's. You can obtain the Choate G3/HK-91 folding stock from L.L. Baston Co. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 1995, El Dorado, AR 71730 — toll free: 1-800-643-1564.)

Military Surplus

With the great influx of M14 complete parts kits (minus the receiver) now available from Armscorp of America (Dept. SOF, 9162 Brookville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20910) who purchased them from Israel, you can be sure there will be quite a run on M14 accessories, especially magazines. There are aftermarket M14 magazines floating around with weak feed lips that aren't worth the sweat off your armpit. But you can get genuine government

issue M14 magazines from Bill Henry at Sierra Supply (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 1390, Durango, CO 81302). New ones will cost you \$9.95 each, used only \$7. They'll also fit in the new Ruger XGI .308 rifle, so you better order some immediately. Ask for Bill's list which covers G.I. manuals, M16 accessories and maintenance gear, gas masks, camouflage fatigues, M-1 Garand equipment, .45 ACP accessories, field jackets, first aid items and LC-2 individual equipment.

Far across the Atlantic, Pat Walker Guns (Dept. SOF, 143 Alexandra Road, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE8 1RB, Great Britain) can provide you with some items a bit more on the wild side. Take Thompson 50-rd. "New York" drums in U.S. government carrying pouches for instance, or Sterling, Sten, Thompson and Beretta sub-machine gun magazines. How about Bren magazines, RPD belt drums, reproduction ChiCom stick grenades, knuckle and trench knives, bayonets, British entrenching tools, World War II homeguard posters and British, U.S. and German web gear? They've got them all.

Not exotic enough? Then try Bill Rodgers at Springfield Sporters Inc. (Dept. SOF, R.D. #1, Penn Run, PA 15765). As Bill shuffles from barn to barn, tripping over mountains of sur-

plus rifles, he keeps uncovering lost hoards of sugar cane for us rattle gun fanatics. There are numerous machine guns you and I will never own (nor would want to), but collecting magazines and belts from automatic rarities and absurdities can be almost as interesting — and a whole lot cheaper. I have belts and magazines from many machine guns I can never hope to possess. Bill Rodgers can get you started on the road to fame as a machine gun magazine/belt collector by providing oddities like Johnson, Madsen and Chauchat LMG magazines and Swiss Bergmann, United Defense and Owens SMG mags for \$15 each and less.

Those of you with FN Model 'D' BARs can convert them to 7x57mm with a barrel assembly for \$75 and magazines for only \$3 each. An elaborate cleaning kit for the FN Model 'D', most of which can be used with the U.S. BAR, complete in a leather carrying case, is available for only \$75. ZB 37 7.92mm ammo cans — copy of the German MG34/42 can — are only \$20 complete with two 100-rd. belts. An ammo-can maintenance kit for the ZB 37 (used by the Brits as the BESA tank machine gun) at \$20 can be put to many uses. Rodgers will also sell you a 7-foot ZB 37 belt stuffed with .30-06 dummy cartridges that looks great on

the wall.

SAF-T-CASES

Class 3 dealers can tote their wares with impunity, provided their destination is not enemy territory — like California. Individuals who want to take their treasured Tommy Gun to a machine gun shoot in another state need to apply for a temporary transfer with the BATF. If you move your wares on a commercial airline, they must be stored in a locked hardcase before they can be declared and checked into the cargo hold. My advice is to tell them at the ticket counter you want to declare an unloaded "firearm." Please, don't say "machine gun."

The very best gun cases for travel are those manufactured by SAF-T-CASE (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 5472, Irving, TX 75015). Featuring one-piece aircraft aluminum construction, heliarc welded corners and a full-length piano hinge, these cases are tough. A neoprene gasket keeps dust, damp air and water from entering the case. And it floats, even with a full load of MAC 10s. Lined with polyether foam and equipped with leather tie-downs to keep firearms from slipping or shifting, the shockproof SAF-T-CASE will not warp or bend. There are four draw bolts, of which two are fitted

Continued on page 82

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ONE of the more telling tales to come out of the war in the Falklands concerns a unit of the Argentine army that surrendered to an element of the Scots Guards. After a sharp encounter, the British succeeded in forcing the Argentines to withdraw. As the Argentines retreated in good order from the advancing Scots, they encountered a patrol from the 1st Battalion of the 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles. Doing an abrupt about-face, the Argentine unit surrendered to the Scots Guards rather than face the Gurkha patrol. Such is the fighting reputation enjoyed by these fighting men from Nepal.

The Gurkha reputation for skill at arms is hard-earned and well-deserved. They have proven their mettle and devotion to duty in an unblemished service record to the British Crown that spans 170 years. Gurkhas come from a rural environment that is hilly and covered with dense vegetation. It is this rugged land that spawned a tough and resolute breed of man and the knife for which they are famous.

The national knife of Nepal, the kukri, was probably an agricultural tool before it became renowned as a weapon. But it has evolved into a single-edged blade about 12 inches long with a pronounced curve sharp on the concave side. The handle is usually straight and without a guard. The blade is forged in such a manner so the swing weight of the knife is well toward the point, enabling one to strike a blow delivering a tremendous amount of force with little muscular effort. The kukri is a prime example of one aspect of blade geometry being accented for maximum effect. The blade curvature and resulting mass placement are design features intended to give a lot of chopping power.

The power in a kukri stroke is near legendary. There are well-documented instances of a Gurkha delivering a blow that split the skull of a man and continued well down into the chest cavity. A somewhat larger version of the kukri is used in the traditional ceremony of *Dushera* in which a water buffalo's head is completely severed in a single stroke. It is believed that failure to completely decapitate the animal with one blow will result in bad luck for the entire regiment for a year.

Actually, it is a great credit to the Gurkhas themselves that they have enjoyed the success that they have had with the kukri, for it does have some serious deficiencies as a *fighting* knife. There is no cutting edge on the back side, so the kukri has no backstroke capability unless you rotate your wrist. The location and design of the point makes the stabbing stroke impractical. And the great emphasis on power and



BATTLE BLADES

by Bill Bagwell

Kukri: From Plowshare to Sword



The kukri falls slightly short as a "fighting knife" but is a great all-purpose or survival tool designed for chopping anything.

swing weight makes the knife difficult to recover from a stroke if you swing and miss. The kukri is essentially a single-purpose chopping implement that is particularly well-suited to clearing brush, chopping small trees, or splitting skulls and severing heads.

There has been a lot of recent interest in the kukri, and we decided to get one and put it through the SOF round of tests. Atlanta Cutlery (Dept. SOF, Box 839, Conyers, GA 30207) sells the military-issue kukri made by the current government contractor. We ordered two for testing. Both came with a copy of the government contract and ordinance drawing and specifications. We frankly did not expect much in the way of a knife, as Atlanta Cutlery sells the issue kukri for \$19.95, and the officer's model for \$21.95. In one way, we got about what we expected, and in another we got a lot more than we bargained for.

Up front, don't expect the fit and finish of any knife that sells for less than 20 bucks to be in the same league with

the custom variety that will cost from 10 to 20 times as much. Atlanta Cutlery's kukri is not a marvel of spit and polish. But it is extremely rugged and sturdy and damn near the closest thing to unbreakable you will see in a knife.

The issue kukri is an excellent case study in how to make a combat knife inexpensively and well. The specifications given by the Inspectorate of Small Arms bears examination by those who may be interested in some of the requirements that the inexpensive kukri is expected to pass. For openers, the cutting edge of the knife is expected to be hardened and tempered within a specified area and the remainder of the blade is to be left soft. This differential tempering gives a serviceable cutting edge supported by a soft, shock-resistant back. This is a guarantee that the kukri will not snap under stress.

To quote from the inspection section of the ordinance drawing: "The hardened part of the blade must be soft enough to permit being re-sharpened with a file and must be hard enough to cut clear through soft, mild steel wire of 12-14 gauge suitably supported on a hard wood or soft metal block without sustaining any damage or deforma-

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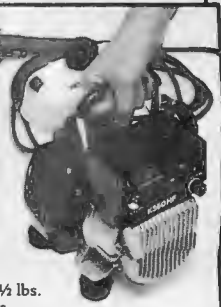
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tion. It will also be struck on the edge on a hard wood block across the grain and on each side on a block. There must be no sign of distortion of the edge, bending of the blade, loosening of the grips."

What the Inspectorate of Small Arms demands, and gets, is a knife that will hack and chop soft metal and hard wood without breaking or bending. They are also getting a knife that we could not break with our bare hands when we clamped it in a vise, one that endured four hard blows on its back across the horn of an anvil without breaking.

The kukri is designed for heavy use in the field. The abrupt bevel of the cutting edge resists chipping, and the selective temper gives a blend of strength and edge holding. The straight carbon steel blade is forged, ground and tempered for maximum effect.

The handle of the issue kukri is made of hard wood. The wooden grips are solidly riveted to the tang, and are required to be treated with linseed oil before fitting. They are specifically not allowed to be varnished. This finish, along with the shape and material specified, guarantees that the issue kukri has a functional handle that will resist hard usage. It is also a comfortable handle in use and is unaffected by extremes of heat or cold.

Nations and societies with histories in which knives have played a big part naturally know how to make blades that will withstand the stress of combat. The best kukris are the products of the village forges of Nepal, and Executive Editor Bill Guthrie owns a particularly nice example that was made before the turn of the century. The forging is skillfully done, and the horn handle is obviously made for a right-handed person. Men skilled in the manufacture of edged weapons know how to make handles fit the men who use them.

While the kukri sold by Atlanta Cutlery is not in the same category as the best of the village forged specimens, it is nonetheless a genuine bargain, if not an outright steal, for \$19.95.

Take it for what it is meant to be — a tough, serviceable knife with no frills, designed for chopping anything you might imagine in the great outdoors. Many knives promise a lot more and deliver far less at a much greater cost.

Don't forget. The kukri is not purely a fighting knife. But it is a pretty good all-around tool that makes a better survival knife than most of those aimed specifically at the survival market. And like most well-designed blades, the kukri can also serve as an effective weapon if you know how to use it. Just ask any Gurkha. ✘



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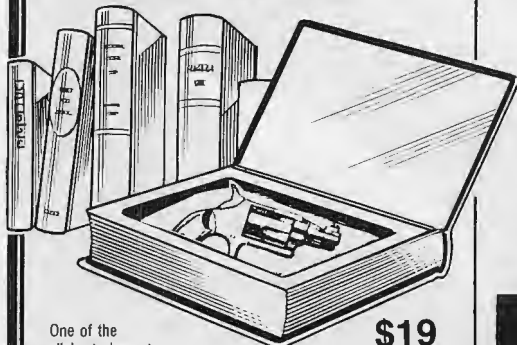
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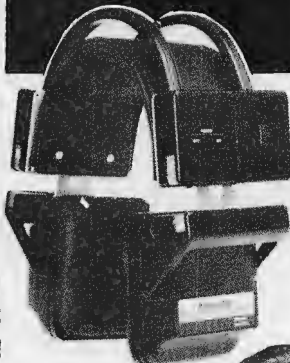
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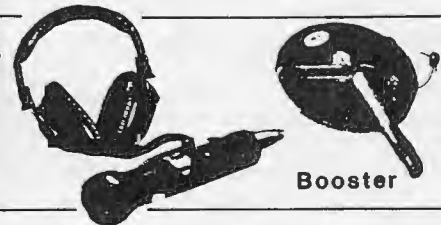
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DURING the Rhodesian war, the hardest task security forces faced was simply finding the terrorists. That holds true for nearly any other guerrilla war you can think of. Counterinsurgency warfare is vicious and lonely; small units operate alone in the bush, searching for an elusive enemy who refuses to stay put. This means days and weeks of endless hours spent on slow, cautious reconnaissance. Often, your only reason for patrolling that area is rumor or suspicion of guerrilla activity.

If you plan to work a stretch of bush for any length of time, and not end up as an enemy target yourself, the need for establishing a secure base of operations will soon become evident. Troops need a base to rest, eat and sleep or they soon begin to lose their sharpness. A firm base also provides a defensible central point for patrolling, abolishing the need for simply tromping around the bush loaded like a donkey with unnecessary gear, leaving enough heavy bootprints to alert even the dimmest terr. Whether you're running a six-man recon team or a platoon-sized fighting patrol, you're going to need a firm base.

There aren't too many ways to set up a secure base of operations — just a right way and a wrong way. The wrong way will at best compromise your mission, and at worst get you killed. So let's discuss the right way.

Site selection is the obvious priority. From a preliminary map study you should be able to choose a position centrally located in your area of operations. High ground often seems the logical choice for defensive and communications purposes, and with the proper ground cover it might be satisfactory. However, high ground tends to isolate the position from the surrounding terrain making it vulnerable to air, ground or indirect fire attack. Also, any movement or breach of light discipline can more easily be observed than on a lower feature. What you're looking for is a site that blends with the rest of the area and has several covered avenues of entrance and escape. Other points to consider are proximity to water, roads or trails, and any nearby built-up areas.

Once you're in the general area, start paying close attention to the ground.

Look for paths or trails not marked on the map, or any other signs of human activity which could compromise the position. Approach the potential camp site slowly and acclimate to the surrounding bush sounds so that anything else will immediately stand out.

About 200 meters from the camp, set the patrol into a defensive formation with flank and rear security ele-



COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

by John Coleman

Patrol Base Basics



A good base of operations in hostile territory should be more secure than this impromptu bivouac in the jungles of Vietnam. Photo: Department of Defense

ments. Rear security should drop back far enough along the approach route to act as an early warning team in the event you're being tracked.

The patrol commander and at least two other members will then go forward to recon the site, moving past the camp on either side. If you've selected this particular piece of ground as a good camp, then someone else might

have had the same idea. No sense in walking straight into their killing zone. Moreover, your patrol might be under observation, and a straight walk-in to the camp will immediately compromise it.

Move past the site until you're sure it's clear, then horseshoe back. If it meets the requirements of good cover, concealment and general security, send one man back along your approach route to bring up the remainder of the patrol. Other recon team members should stay at the site to keep it secure.

The patrol itself can be brought up in

a variety of ways to confuse any enemy following its spoor. Single file along the recon team's route will bring enemy trackers across the camp's flanks — and through your fields of fire. The patrol may also shake out into an extended line formation, moving up and through the camp. It's extremely difficult for all but the best trackers to follow a single man's trail through the bush.

Using the single-file method, an early warning team is left at the point where the patrol begins its horseshoe into the 12 o'clock side of the camp. (12 o'clock is determined by the patrol's original direction of movement; 6 o'clock faces the way they came.)

During the patrol's move, organize a defensive perimeter inside the camp delineating areas of responsibility and arcs of fire using the clock method — one element sets up from 6 to 9 o'clock, another from 9 to 12, etc. In this way troops can be positioned immediately upon their arrival without unnecessary noise or movement.

Automatic weapons should initially be placed on immediate and likely avenues of enemy approach: at the camp's 6 and 12 o'clock positions, and on the flank facing your approach route. If someone's tracking your patrol, they'll now walk through the killing zone of three machine guns.

Once all the weapons have been sited and the early warning team recalled (camouflaging the entry route as they come), the camp should stand-to for at least 30 minutes. You're at your most vulnerable during this time while troops get used to the surrounding terrain and bush sounds, and if you've been compromised during the approach, this is the time you might get hit. It's imperative that a crash rendezvous point — a recognizable terrain feature well away from the camp — be made known to every man in the event the camp is attacked by a superior ground force, enemy air or indirect fire, and you're forced to bail out.

The next priority for camp security consists of sending early warning teams out along likely avenues of enemy approach; they are also tasked with a recon of the immediate area, checking for "dead ground" that could hide enemy patrols. Other patrol members must know the positions of these teams, and a system of communications — radio, string, whistles — must be organized.

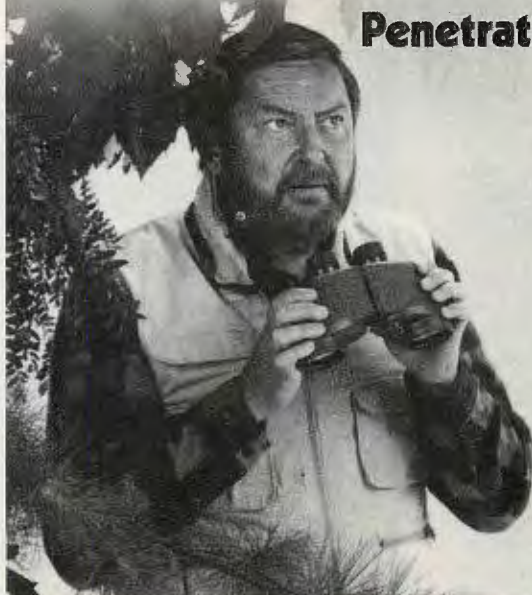
With security out, the camp can now begin the business of preparing and camouflaging fighting/rest positions, garbage and latrine pits, and working out normal camp routine.

You can now get down to the business of patrolling, secure in the knowledge that you've got a defensible and well-organized base of operations. ☒

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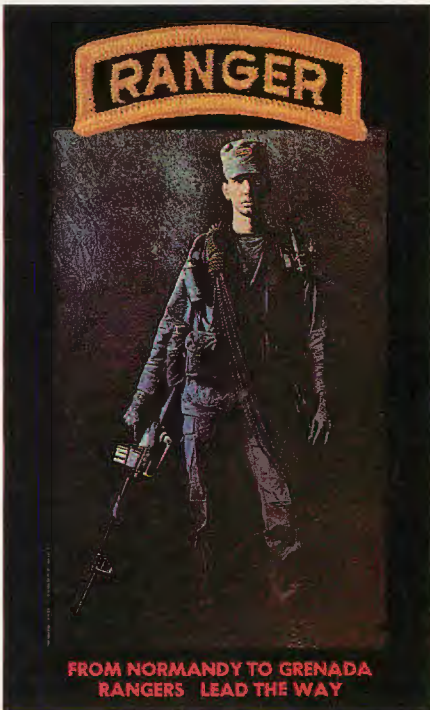
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A soft afternoon rain had turned into a slow drizzle and then abruptly stopped as the sky yielded to a dark night. A slight breeze blew in from the valley below, cooling us off and rustling the palm trees. Careful. The dark shadows and silhouettes could be anything in the night.

Our small group had been on an overnight patrol. We traversed a variety of terrain during the days; long sloping hills covered with craters, short rises of large rocky cliffs and marshland edged with tall elephant grass.

I always hated walking in the grass. The edges of some of the blades were so sharp that they would cut through your pants and leave little red welts that would take a week to heal. It was also a favorite spot for the VC and NVA to plant mines.

As days went, this one had been uneventful. We had our evening meal and then deployed ourselves along a small trail running into the valley. It looked like it was going to be a quiet night for a change.

Bob and I were assigned the point position and we were given an M79 grenade launcher. I never cared too much for it. I preferred my shotgun. It was a much better ambush breaker than a machine gun and the VC and NVA were terrified of shotguns for some reason.

At midnight it was Bob's turn for watch and I went to sack out. I had developed two habits when sleeping in the bush. One was never to take my boots off, just unlace them, in case I needed to move in a hurry. The second was to sleep with my hands over my face. That way, if a round landed near me, the shrapnel would hit my hands instead of going in my face.

At 0100 Bob called me and said we had company. Sure enough, I could make out four or five figures coming up the trail toward us. I could make out a khaki colored uniform — NVA — followed by a figure in the typical VC black pajamas and hat.

Bob readied the M79 and told me to get set with the shotgun. "Put it on rock 'n' roll," he always used to say.

When the figures were about 30 feet away, Bob fired the Blooper at the middle of the group and I opened up at the lead figures with my shotgun. Bob fired a few rounds and then cut loose with his M16. The night air was soon filled with blue-gray smoke. Surprisingly, there was little return fire. We continued firing and then leapfrogged down the trail, covering each other.

I would recon by fire with the shotgun while Bob sprayed the tree line with his M16. We fired a green flare to indicate to any night-flying hunter-killer gunships that we were friendly troops down here.



I WAS THERE

by Robert P. Dodd

'Bush Busters



Some preferred the shotgun, and it was a pretty good ambush breaker. Photo: Department of Defense

As quickly as things started, they stopped. The wind cleared the smoke and the smell away. Once more the air became cool and fresh. I had been sweating during the action and now my wet uniform gave me a chill.

The rest of the night was spent at 100 percent alert. At first light we moved down the trail to count bodies. We found nine and there were spots where two or three others had crawled or been dragged away by their comrades.

The first dead man was an NVA regular. The shotgun blast had taken off most of his left shoulder and neck. He

was carrying one of our G.I. plastic canteens on his belt. The second man was VC. He too had been hit by my shotgun.

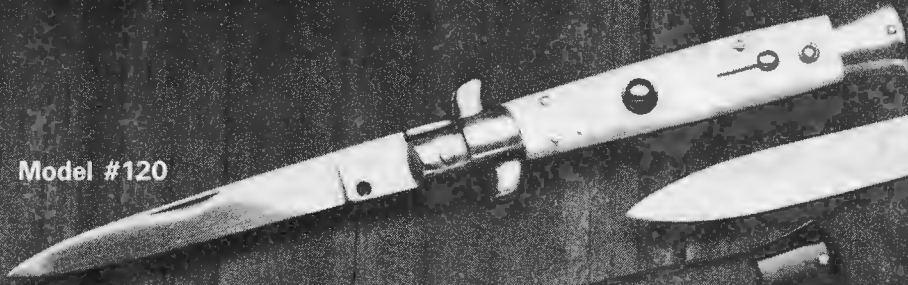
The rest of the dead were checked by other squad members. A copter was coming in to pick us up. One of the fire team leaders and I dug some shallow graves for the dead.

Before our copter arrived, the CO called on the radio to wish us well and congratulate us. Nine confirmed and another two or three probables was a good night's work in his book. Nobody in the squad had gotten so much as a scratch.

As the copters landed, Bob and I looked at each other. We were out of food and I had four rounds left for the shotgun. Perfect timing. ✕

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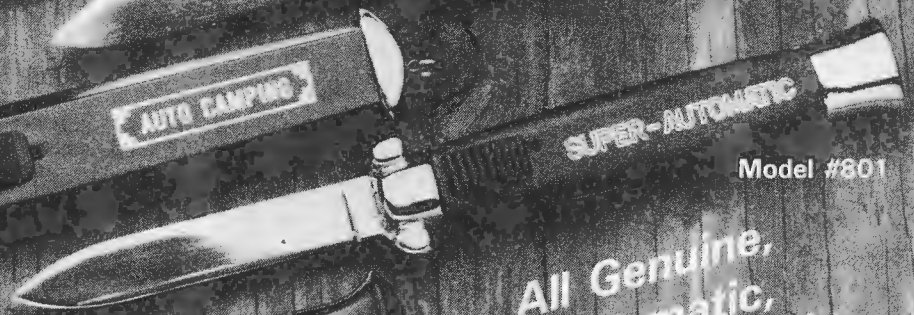
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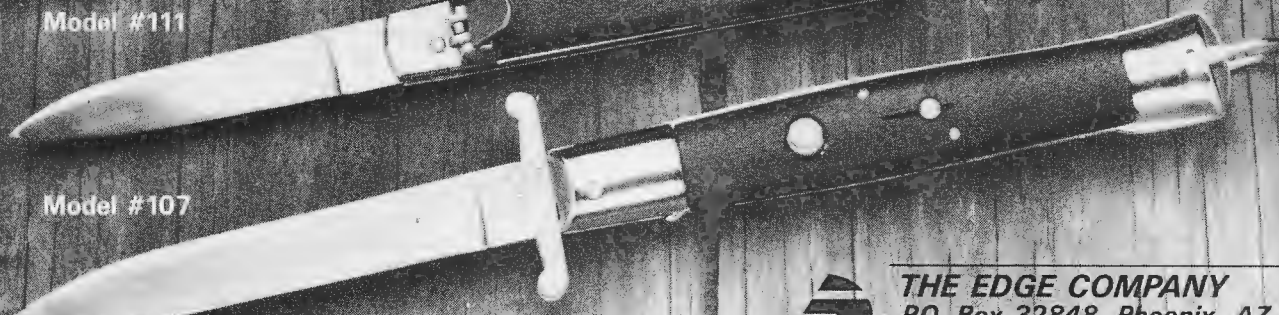
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FLAK

Continued from page 7

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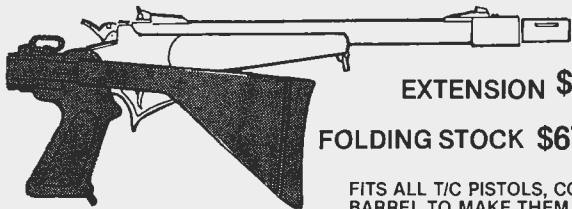
Sirs:

I am an Army staff sergeant who is currently a Bradley Fighting Vehicle Instructor at Fort Hood, Texas. I noticed several errors in "Tar Heel Tankers" (SOF, February '86). The weight of a combat loaded M2 is 26 tons, not 24 as stated. The current crew load is a total of nine with three vehicle crew and six dismount soldiers. Normal crew load for the M3 is five soldiers; the other seats give way for more ammo. The coaxial machine gun is an M240C, the difference being the gun has a left-hand feed. The maximum engagement line for this weapon is 900 meters, not 1,200 meters. A Bradley Vehicle Commander is referred to as a BC, not as VC or TC. Please, never VC! I have read all the reports on the Bradley Fighting Vehicle and I feel they are unjustified. I am confident in the BFV and will ride it into combat anytime. To those critics of the BFV, I invite them to choose any other fighting vehicle in the world and bring it to Fort Hood. I'll be glad to go one-on-one with them.

C.J. Hutchinson
SSG, USA

There are probably more opinions on the Bradley than there are on the Abrams. All have more than a grain of truth in them. But the opinions of those who would have us wait for the "perfect" vehicle — or any weapon for that matter — ignore the fact that nothing is born perfect. And only testing in the field can finally work out any bugs in the system. Even if the Bradley isn't perfect, it's a step in the right direction. As for the stats on the Bradley, we got them from the Army so it seems there's some confusion in the ranks.

We certainly sympathize with your indignation at being called a VC — our most humble apologies. We should have seen the irony in that moniker right off the bat. ✕



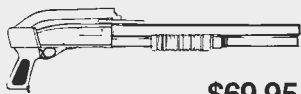
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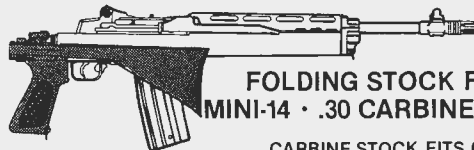


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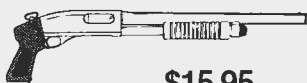
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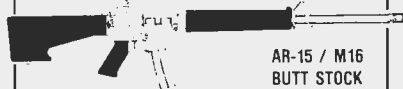
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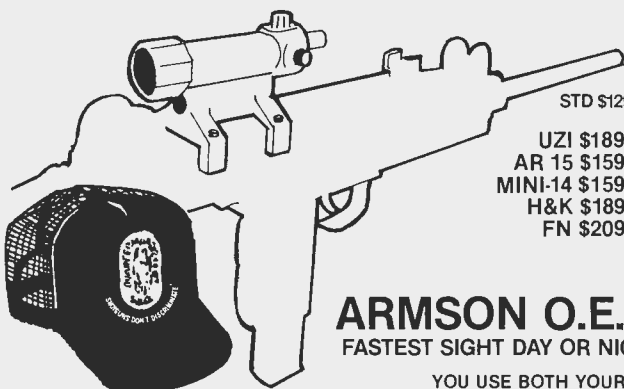
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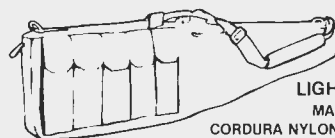
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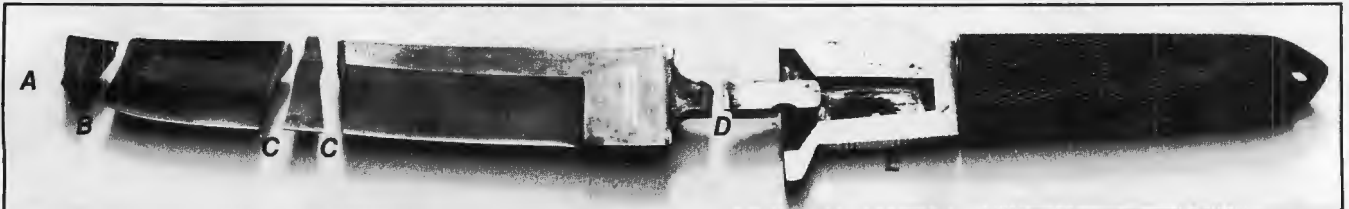
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A PUBLIC SERVICE
WARNING
 FROM COLD STEEL, INC.

**BEWARE OF
 TANTO IMPOSTORS!**

The Tanto has become tremendously popular since its introduction by Cold Steel, in 1981. Recently, in an attempt to capitalize on the Tanto's success, several companies have begun selling cheaply fabricated impostors. These knives may prove dangerous when subjected to the abuse that an original Cold Steel Tanto was made to withstand.

Cold Steel purchased a number of these cheap look-alikes and had them tested by Master Bladesmith, Dan Maragni (of the American Bladesmith Society). With his permission we are reprinting pertinent parts of his report on the test knife below... a typical impostor.



A "Stabbed point into dry, hard maple and snapped out losing 3/16" of point. Drove into maple 3/4" and snapped out losing 3/4" of point."

B "Placed blade in vise to yokote (7/8" from where point was) and applied light pressure -blade bent slightly and then snapped."

C "Placed blade in vise 3-1/2" from shoulder and applied moderate pressure by hand and blade bent 10°. Heavier pressure snapped blade and broke the hilt."

D "Placed blade in vise at edge/ricasso transition and applied pipe very lightly - tang snapped and hilt broke."

E "Obviously the hilt is a very weak point in the construction of these knives. Upon sectioning of the hilts I found them to be a pretty poor casting (note grain structure and holes) with the blade only extending into them 1-3/8". It also appears that the only thing holding the blade in the hilt is a small amount of epoxy."

A few excerpts from Mastersmith Maragni's conclusions:

"The wide variations exhibited by these two knives leads me to believe that the quality control in the heat treatment is very poor. Not only does it vary widely from knife to knife but also from place to place on the same blade."

"The hilts on these knives are atrocious, not only are they very poorly constructed but they are also very uncomfortable to use. They are difficult to grip, and heavy and awkward to cut or chop with. They are also fairly easily broken and removed from the blade."

When subjected to the same tests by Mastersmith Maragni the Tanto: "...amazed me with its ultimate toughness...and suffered no chipping, breaking, or any other ill effects."

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR COLD STEEL QUALITY

THE ORIGINAL TANTO



A Armor piercing point. Unique chisel grind defeats all soft body armor and has even been driven through a steel drum and a car door with no damage.

B Razor sharp edge is hand honed and buffed. Guaranteed shaving sharp.

C Hollow ground blade with satin finish. Scientifically designed, 23° curve makes it ideal for all cutting and slashing strokes.

D Massive spine provides unparalleled strength. Line grain finish

E True full tang 3/4" wide 3/16" thick 4-1/2" long.

F Finest 400 series stainless expertly hardened and tempered, will withstand twice the side load pressure of 440C stainless.

G Lightening holes slightly reduce handle weight so knife balances perfectly just behind the guard.

H Pommel stud permanently welded to tang. Made of special alloy steel to absorb shock of crushing blows with the pommel.

Undoubtedly part of the Tanto's popularity comes from its sleek, East/West design and immaculate fit and finish, but beauty should be more than skin deep. The above photo shows that thousands of satisfied Tanto owners already know... there is no substitute for Cold Steel quality. Pick up a Cold Steel Tanto... see the finish, test the razor edge, feel the grip and balance, and be assured of Cold Steel quality to the core!

This Tanto is a friend for life!

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H&K'S P9S



Don't Judge a Gun By its Cover

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

AESTHETICS. It plays no small role in the popularity of specific guns. The Colt Single Action Army revolver and the P.08 Luger pistol are classic examples of handguns whose external shape and form create desirability despite their true merit as firearms. We all fall prey, at one time or another, to this cult of beauty. The Thompson submachine gun is an exquisite sculpture of steel and wood. And yet, realizing it is far too heavy for its genre, I would never carry it into battle.

At first glance, the Heckler & Koch P9S pistol offends our orthodox senses. But, like the ugly Mauser Broomhandle, one can learn to love it. It's been around for a decade in .45 ACP and was first introduced in 1970 in the 9mm Parabellum chambering, although always in very limited quantities. Subject to availability, it rates not even a mention in H&K's slick Madison Avenue catalog. It has never appealed to me. Until now.

The single, most salient feature of H&K's line of small arms is the delayed-blowback, roller-locking system of operation. Until the advent of the P9S, the Czech Model 52 (chambered for the Model 48 cartridge, a hotter version of the

Heckler & Koch's P9S: SOF's test specimen chambered in caliber .45 ACP. The P9S' only downfall is excessive muzzle whip.



P9S field-stripped.
P9S bolt head and locking rollers.

HK P9S SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber45 ACP or 9mm Parabellum
Operation	Delayed blowback with locking rollers. Single or double action with cocking/slide-stop lever; nonexposed hammer. Semiautomatic only. Manual safety locks firing pin and also blocks contact with hammer.
Weight, empty (w/o magazine)	27.85 ounces
Length, overall	7.6 inches
Barrel length	4.0 inches
Height	5.4 inches
Width (over grips) ...	1.3 inches
Stocks	Black plastic or optional wood.
Sights	Fixed front blade (0.1-inch width) with white vertical bar; adjustable for windage zero. Square-notch rear with two orange bars.
Finish	Black phosphate
Magazine	Single-line box type; 9-rd. capacity in 9mm Parabellum, 7-rd. capacity in .45 ACP.
Price	Combat Model: 9mm Parabellum, \$666 .45 ACP, \$732 Target Model: 9mm Parabellum, \$799 .45 ACP, \$866 Sports/Competition Model: 9mm Parabellum only, \$1,333
Manufacturer	Heckler & Koch Inc., Dept. SOF, 14601 Lee Road, Chantilly, VA 22021.

7.62x25mm ComBloc pistol/SMG round) was the only roller-locked pistol in existence. This system of operation first appeared in the STG-45M assault rifle developed at the Mauser Werke in 1945 just before the end of WWII. It was an offshoot on the evolutionary tree created by the MP44 series.

A former Mauser engineer, Ludwig Vorgrimler, was responsible for the postwar development of the roller-locking concept. After building two prototypes in France, Vorgrimler moved to Spain and became associated with CETME. By 1956 a CETME rifle, chambered for the 7.62x51mm cartridge, was introduced using Vorgrimler's principles. It was adopted by the Spanish army in 1958. After a harsh dispute with FN over licensed production of the G1 (the German version of the FN FAL rifle), the West German government adopted the CETME rifle as the G2 during this same time frame. After refinement by Heckler & Koch, who was granted the contract along with Rheinmetall, the rifle was redesigned as the G3 by the Bundeswehr.

H&K's P9S makes use of Vorgrimler's design in the following manner. The bolt mechanism consists of two major components: the bolt head, containing the two rollers and extractor, and the bolt body, which contains the spring-loaded firing pin and is fixed to the slide. Although referred to as locking rollers, the action is never totally locked. In the firing position, inclined surfaces on the bolt body lie between the two rollers on the bolt head and force these rollers into recesses in the barrel extension. After ignition, the rollers are cammed inward against the bolt body's inclined planes by rearward pressure on the bolt head. The inclined surfaces on the bolt body resist the roller's inward movement, as does the recoil spring. As a result, the bolt body and slide move rearward four times as fast as the bolt head. After the rollers are fully in, the bolt head is blown back by residual pressure and the empty case is extracted. The hammer is rolled back by the bolt body. Simultaneously the empty case is thrown out of the ejection port by the spring-loaded pivoting ejector mounted to the receiver. Rearward movement of the slide ceases after it contacts a plastic buffer under a housing in the receiver. The recoil spring, which surrounds the barrel, drives the slide forward, stripping another round from the magazine into the chamber. Another round can be fired only after the trigger has been released to permit the disconnector to bear on the sear which is engaged in the hammer notch.

I have no objection to this system, except when it is applied to sustained-fire machine guns. As there can be no regulator with blowback operation, no power reserve is available to deal with increased fouling associated with sustained rates of fire over long periods of time. As a consequence, machine guns like the HK21 and its derivatives are designed to operate with maximum energy at all times. The unfortunate results are shorter component life and high cyclic rates.

With regard to the P9S, all of this takes place in a remarkably compact package. Through the efficient use of plastics and stampings, the .45 ACP Combat version of the P9S weighs in at only 27.85 ounces without magazine — 11 ounces less than the Colt M1911A1 Government Model. Even with a 4-inch barrel, the 7.6-inch overall length is 1 inch less than the M1911A1. As the magazine holds but nine rounds in 9mm Parabellum and seven rounds in .45 ACP, the width at the grips is only 1.3 inches.

Let's take a closer look at the startling features H&K has incorporated into the P9S. What we would normally refer to as a pistol's "frame" is in this instance composed of two components: a plastic trigger guard/front strap and sheet-metal receiver. A one-piece plastic grip is held to the rear of the receiver by two screws through the backstrap. There is a thumb swell on the left panel in just the right place. Optional wood grips with thumb swells on either the

right or left sides are available for \$108.

The trigger guard has three finger grooves molded into the front strap. The front of the trigger guard is hooked and grooved for those who insist on employing improper firing techniques. The magazine release catch is located in a European position at the bottom rear of the magazine well. I don't like this. It's slow and clumsy. However, if your opposition is not lying in a puddle of blood after eight rounds, there were either too many of them and not enough of you or you should have been carrying a submachine gun.

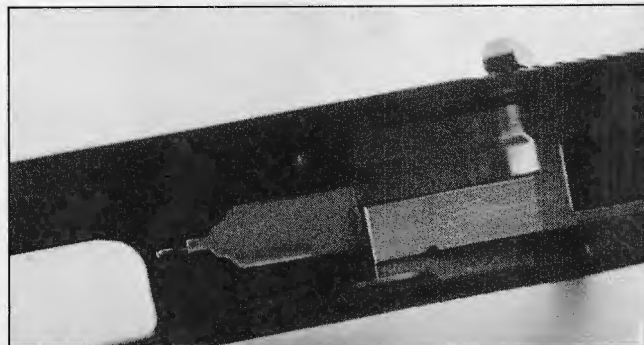
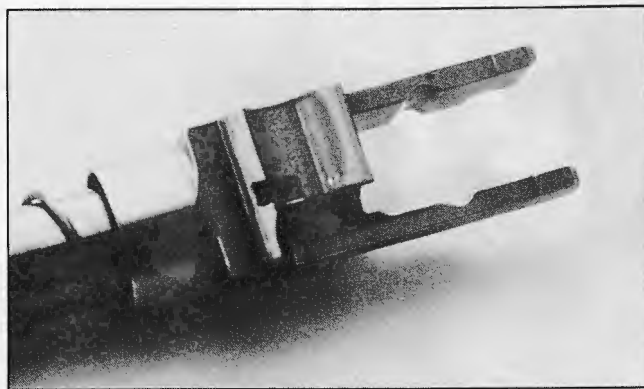
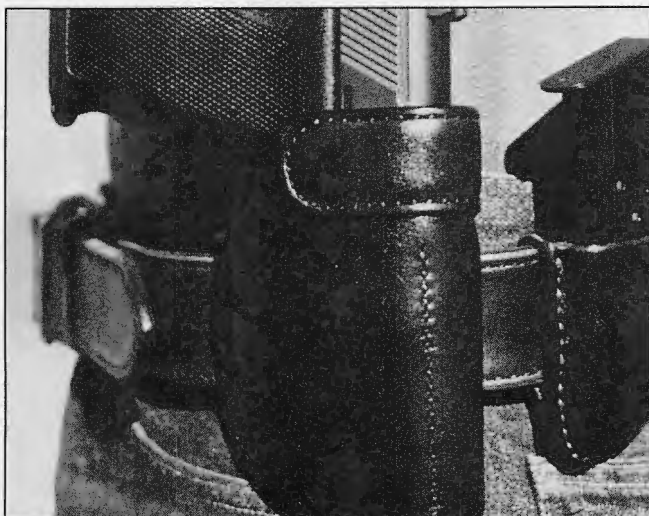
Located on the left side just to the rear of the trigger guard is one of the P9S' most unusual features. It's called a cocking lever, but it operates more like a plunger, as it is manipulated by pressing downward on its checkered button. This magic button serves a number of wondrous purposes. First, it can be used to release the slide stop which holds the slide rearward after the last shot has been fired. The P9S can be fired either single or double action. To place the P9S in the double-action mode, depress the cocking lever and pull the trigger. Release the cocking lever before the trigger and the hammer will rotate upward to its uncocked position. Either fire the first shot in this manner or depress the cocking lever again without pulling the trigger. This will rotate the hammer back to its cocked position. When the hammer is rotated rearward, it drives a sheet-metal indicator bar through a hole in the rear of the receiver. An automatic safety mechanism engages if your thumb should slip off the cocking lever while lowering the hammer. When uncocked, the distance from the backstrap curve to the front of the trigger is 3.3 inches. Cocked, in the single-action mode this distance is reduced by only 0.2 inches. The single-action trigger pull weight is a crisp 3.5 pounds. At double-action we get a smooth and consistent 10 pounds with very little stacking before final release of the hammer.

The receiver group also contains the pivoting barrel catch which retains the barrel in a stationary position during the operating cycle. Directly in front of the barrel catch is a ribbed plastic buffer under a steel housing.

A steel, single-line box magazine holds nine rounds in the 9mm Parabellum chambering and seven rounds in .45 ACP. The magazine's sheet-metal body has a single seam. Holes punched on each side indicate the number of rounds loaded. Take care when loading as the edges on the magazine body in front of the feed lips are sharp. When the P9S was first introduced, a few, now long gone, were produced in caliber 7.65x21mm (.30 Luger), a bottleneck cartridge still popular in Europe.

The P9S slide is every bit as astounding as the rest of the pistol. It is neither a forging nor investment casting. A heavy

P9S in Milt Sparks #55BN crossdraw rig.



P9S barrel extension and locking lug.

P9S bolt body and firing pin mounted to sheet-metal slide.

gauge steel stamping has been bent and two caps robot-welded onto each end in such a manner as to defy detection with the naked eye. Six guide lugs have been punched into the slide (which rides in rails outside the receiver in the Browning manner), three on each side — two up front and four to the rear. After heat treatment, the slide's exterior has been sandblasted and black phosphated.

Located on the slide's left side, the safety lever must be pivoted upward into the 'fire' position (red dot exposed). This is contrary to the movement required by the Colt M1911A1 and will annoy some. However, it not only locks the firing pin but rotates its own axis pin to impose a round surface which prevents the hammer from striking the firing pin. As this safety mechanism does not interfere with either the trigger, sear, or hammer movement, the P9S can be dry-fired without damage to any component. Just make sure the pistol is empty first, as live rounds and the wrong safety position can damage the mirror you are shooting into.

The extractor serves as a loaded-chamber indicator. But who cares? I always rack the slide slightly to check the chamber, and it's a habit that should become automatic to you, too. In addition, the firing pin and its spring are not easily removed by the operator. I don't like that.

Also unique is the barrel's polygonal rifling. Because there are no pronounced grooves and lands, gas cutting, fouling and frictional resistance are decreased. The result is a slight increase in muzzle velocity and a noticeable increase in accuracy. Failing to end an M1911A1 shooting session with a box of jacketed bullets will yield you about 30 minutes with a Lewis Lead Remover back at the ranch. You could shoot pure lead balls through the P9S all day and still spend no more than a minute or two cleaning the barrel. Surrounding the barrel is the recoil spring with ends of different diameters. The small end slides over the barrel and into the barrel extension's recess.

Sight radius is 5.8 inches and sights on the combat model are fixed. The front sight is a generous 0.1 inch in width. It alone can be adjusted for windage zero by taping it in the

Continued on page 84



ANGOLAN ASSAULT

UNITA Wins, FAPLA Flops

by Almerigo Grilz

BROADCASTS of the pro-Soviet Luanda government radio were monotonous: "Hundreds of bandits [the guerrillas of pro-Western National Union for the Total Independence of Angola — UNITA] have been killed. The remnants of counterrevolutionary mercenary gangs are fleeing to Namibia. Their main base of Jamba is about to fall to advancing popular forces."

During our two-month stay inside UNITA-ruled Angola (comprising more or less one-third of the country) we had many opportunities to appreciate the differences between propaganda communiques and reality.

It was on the 22nd of September 1985 that we left Likuwa (the main logistical base of UNITA) and headed north to the disputed town of Mavinga. The town is the key to critical logistical lines for UNITA troops in the northwest, and Luanda radio had been announcing its conquest by the government army.

The advance of FAPLA (People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola) troops had started on 15 August from Cuito Canavale, an air-supplied base which intrudes into UNITA territory. It was the second move of an all-out offensive labeled "2nd Congress of MPLA-Partido do Trabalho." The hard-liners within the MPLA regime in Luanda had pushed for delivering a formidable blow to UNITA and crushing once and for all the feeble proposals of the faction favorable to a negotiated settlement with the anti-communist organization.

The defeat of the "bandits" would have been the ultimate triumph for the party's orthodox Marxist-Leninist ideologist, Lucio Lara, and his followers: Colonel Franca Ndalú, FAPLA chief of staff; Ico Carreira, chief of the air force; Enrique Santos Onambue, head of Angolan security; and army chief of operations, Lieutenant Colonel Ngongo.

These people enjoy the confidence of the Soviets, who have been mastering the country since the MPLA gained power in 1975.

OPPOSITE: UNITA soldiers climb onto the remains of an enemy BRDM-2. Photo: Albatross Press Agency

ROVING COMBAT REPORTER

Almerigo Grilz, a reporter for the Italian Albatross Press Agency, has been covering conflicts around the world, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, Lebanon and Burma. His work has been picked up by many magazines and television stations throughout Europe. This is his first story for SOF.

"This time the Russians are much more directly involved in military operations," UNITA president, Dr. Jonas Malheiro Savimbi, explained. "In the past they weren't traveling in tanks on the battlefields. Now they are."

According to UNITA intelligence, each FAPLA brigade is advised by up

UNITA regulars check out the remains of an Mi-8 helicopter shot down during FAPLA's ill-fated offensive. Photo: Albatross Press Agency



to 15 Soviets. That may be on the high side, but there never seems to be less than five: one adviser to the political commissar, one to the military commander of the brigade, and the others to the armored vehicles, artillery and logistics.

"One of them, Lieutenant K. Kirov Vorochilov, adviser to the 8th Mechanized Brigade, was killed inside a BTR-60 on the 7th of September," remarked Colonel Jardo of UNITA operational HQ.

Much of the increased ferocity in FAPLA's new offensive is due to heavy air support. Soviet and Cuban pilots are flying MiG-21s and MiG-23s, Luanda-based Su-22s, and An-26 cargo planes. UNITA doesn't seem overly concerned about the rising threat from the air. "In spite of enemy military might Mavinga is still in our hands. You'll see it for yourselves," UNITA officers insisted.

On the night of 24 September we were covering the last part of our travel to the front. The voyage on the rough, sandy trails lacing Cuando Cubango Province was not always easy for the Mercedes truck which carried us and our 23-man escort. No more than one hour had passed when our driver screeched to a halt — some noise had registered in his radarlike ears. Everyone froze, and listened. There it was. A dull thumping strummed the air ahead of us. With racing hearts we strained our eyes to make out the ghostly shape that formed in the sky ahead. It was an Mi-24 attack helicopter, its black outline performing a sinister dance across the moonlit sky.

Only sparse brush dotted the trail; there was no place to hide. We could only wait and pray. Someone must have been listening because the helicopter missed its cowering quarry and flew on to its unknown destination.

We reached Mavinga before dawn. Brigadier Tito Chingungyi, 30, permanent secretary of the UNITA executive committee, was waiting for us in another small bush camp.

"It's late now," he said. "You were supposed to leave for the front taking advantage of the dark." The unexpected stop had slowed up our program — we would have to wait a few more hours: UNITA is an inflexible organization: Everything must be carefully planned. They can't just hold everything up for a couple of journalists.

It was sunrise when we drove through Mavinga, a collection of pastel-colored buildings, and reached another base concealed a few hundred meters from the town. A section of blue-shirted commandos with individual weapons, one 60mm



Front-line UNITA troops bear the brunt of Luanda's latest offensive. This trooper shoulders an M79 grenade launcher. Photo: Albatross Press Agency

mortar, an M79 grenade launcher, an RPG-7 and a couple of RPDs joined our party and were soon busy digging in. With that many people on the job it wasn't long before a lot of foxholes were ready near the foliage-covered half-underground huts to provide shelter in case of air raids.

We waited under a merciless sun until afternoon. The air raid siren screamed twice from another invisible base, but no danger approached. In the afternoon we walked to Mavinga to take some photos. It's a ghost town, deserted by its inhabitants since the war began. In the UNITA "Republic" people prefer to keep far away from concrete buildings which might become targets for enemy aircraft.

The remnants of the battle which expelled FAPLA from Mavinga five years ago were everywhere: fallen roofs, wreckage littering the few streets, slogans painted on the walls. The commandos deployed security, but it was only a formality — the battle was raging far away, an ongoing thunder rumbling some 25 kilometers to the northwest. We saw a cloud of black smoke rising far away on the flat plain. "Napalm," Colonel Vindes mumbled.

When we returned to camp, Brigadier Tito had bad news. "Your program for the front is postponed. The enemy is maneuvering and we don't know yet which axis he's going to take. You must drive back to Likuwa."

Protests were useless — our truck was already loaded and we were politely, but firmly, invited to board it. The driver left at once in a cloud of

swirling dust. It was only some days later that we found out exactly what had happened.

Four FAPLA brigades had been concentrated in circular defensive formations and UNITA decided the time was ripe for an offensive move. Savimbi had assembled 5,500 regulars and called down an additional seven battalions from the Cazombo front in the north. But when all seemed set for the decisive attack, the FAPLA units opened up their perimeter, outmaneuvering UNITA. That's when we had to leave.

A map with notes in Cyrillic characters belonging to a Russian adviser of 25th Mechanized Brigade (found later on the battlefield) shows clearly the FAPLA push southward. Their vanguard's deepest thrust was on the 28th of September at 1500 hours. The anti-Marxist forces apparently had a difficult time and were forced to give way, but on the 29th FAPLA again concentrated in two big units of two brigades each. Mavinga seemed doomed.

It was now or never. Savimbi, who had come to the front to take overall command of his army, finally gave the green light for a carefully planned attack. His artillery had been deployed in the bushes all around the enemy: 81mm and 120mm mortars and 76mm guns. The bombardment was unleashed with deadly accuracy, but it wasn't aimed at the external lines where enemy infantrymen had dug a network of foxholes and trenches. Rather, they zeroed on the interior of the large, circular formations where the supplies, headquarters and artillery were positioned. Flames rose angrily into the sky as UNITA's rounds struck home. FAPLA troops on the front line were left without proper support and coordination. Savimbi's battalion charged. On the 30th the FAPLA forces, shattered and shocked, began to retreat.

Soviet advisers' efforts to command an orderly withdrawal were frustrated as battalions got mixed up and armored personnel carriers drove at wild speed through the bush. Acres of crushed and trampled trees and shrubs spoke volumes when we visited the battlefield some days later.

Bodies lay everywhere, most of them clad in the dark grayish camouflage fatigues of FAPLA. Some gripped each other in their bunkers, others had been burned alive inside their BTRs, but most were simply scattered around in the hot, explosion-torn sand.

Thousands of propaganda leaflets had been flung over the landscape on the wind. A photo of the president of the "People's Republic of Angola," José Eduardo Dos Santos, wearing

an unmistakable Soviet-style uniform, topped a message calling for the desertion of "UNITA officers and soldiers." "Savimbi is sending you to suffer and to die for a lost cause," it continued. "He's making promises he cannot maintain. The defeats of Mavinga and Cazombo are clear proof of it." Since national radio had been announcing the conquest of Mavinga for weeks, the MPLA cadres had no reason to doubt it.

But the soldiers on the front line certainly did. Letters found near some of their corpses weren't so optimistic. "Here the situation is always worse," a soldier had written on a letter he would never send. "At night it's cold and our spirit is low."

On the night of 7 October we camped in the thick bush south of the Lomba River; the retreating communist forces had recrossed it on the 3rd. Around us, battalions of UNITA were ready to march on and press their victory. The complex logistic chain worked overtime to provide the supplies and reinforcements necessary to continue the battle.

In the morning we met the one-armed Brigadier Bock, widely acclaimed as one of the best officers in UNITA. He had been recalled from the Cazombo front for the emergency and had directed the left flank during the decisive battle on 29 September.

"Now we're pressing our success," he explained. "The enemy has again formed a defensive circular position north of the Lomba River. They hope to get reinforcements and supplies by helicopter, but the pilots are afraid to fly now, after our anti-aircraft shot down 16 helicopters and one MiG-21. They lack most of all water, and we're ambushing their columns when they try to march down to the river to get it."

We examined two of the helicopters lost by Luanda — one, an Mi-24, had crash-landed in the bush on 3 October. The gunship was damaged but not destroyed and the pilot had been captured. The crew of an Mi-8, shot down on the banks of the Lomba, had been even less lucky — their ashes were among those of the helicopter. Savimbi's anti-aircraft has been effective.

After UNITA received a shipment of weapons during the foregoing weeks: 14.5mm and 23mm AA guns, and

ABOVE RIGHT: UNITA regulars stick to their foxholes during the early hours of the battle for Mavinga. Photo: Albatross Press Agency

RIGHT: UNITA regulars go through live-fire drills during training in Jamba. Photo: Albatross Press Agency



Yugoslavian-made M55 20mm triple-barreled guns (probably captured by the SADF and later transferred to UNITA), the equipment was put on Unimogs and ferried to the front.

We joined a battery of six 120mm mortars of the "Independent Artillery Battalion" in the bushes on the northern side of the Lomba. "The enemy is four kilometers away from here," explained the commander, Major Bumba. "We also have other batteries of 81mm deployed in different places to avoid being easily located. Each battery has a specific target. A reserve is ready to intervene when necessary." The mortars pounded FAPLA for some 20 minutes, then were pushed back to the Unimogs and moved away.

Dark smoke rose from behind the hills — more trucks of the slowly disintegrating communist column were burning. Heavy-caliber weapons and BM-21 multiple rocket launchers shot back. A lot of noise, but few results — the shells and rockets exploded far from our area.

While we were still taking pictures of destroyed BTRs near the river, the radio alerted our escort that aircraft had been spotted. "Quickly. Take cover," shouted Col. Vindes. No problem there: The whole area was full of individual holes dug by the retreating FAPLA along their route.

MiG-21s and a helicopter screamed by — the jets seemed to be covering the copter as it swooped in to drop supplies to the beleaguered FAPLA.

"No chance. They cannot land, and most of the tanks thrown or parachuted down get broken or lost," summarized an officer after the battle.

Brigadier Bock was directing his troops while moving continuously

The cream of the crop: Soldiers from the Special Actions Brigade operate in urban areas, specializing in sabotage, hit-and-run and reconnaissance. Photo: Albatross Press Agency

along the front line. A small man with a strong and energetic personality, he shouted orders that nobody dared disobey.

"The bush is ours. This is the strength of the guerrilla," he said. "Even when the enemy was advancing with all his might, our troops were moving all around him. Luanda and Cuban forces can probably maintain a strategic occupation of the major part of the country, but it's the guerrilla which is holding tactical control."

On 11 October we again moved north of the Lomba and through a large, open plain of swamps. Units of the 25th Intervention Battalion were providing cover along our front and flanks and reconnaissance patrols kept in constant contact with us to prevent nasty surprises.

The dull thump of artillery echoed in the distance and couple of times enemy shells exploded in the bush at our backs while we were trying to advance through the treacherous swamp. Once we had reached the other side we stopped, waiting for instructions. We had been told we were about to witness the ambush of a FAPLA column — about three battalions — which was trying to reach the river to collect water.

Mortars dueled as we prepared for the coming firefight. Instead of proceeding we were ordered to fall back to a brushy island in the middle of the plain where some UNITA regulars were providing a rearguard and resting area for the injured before evacuation.

FAPLA soldiers appeared in the bush. We could see them, small dark figures some 800 meters away, stamping in the open swamps and trying to drink the dirty, black water. Their thirst must have been terrible — they were daring to stay in full sight where they could easily be gunned down for a draft of that putrid liquid.

UNITA marksmen, invisible to us, opened fire on the group. The small



UNITA patrol on the Luenge River near the Likuwa base. Photo: Albatross Press Agency

outlines of FAPLA soldiers tried to regroup, stumbling and falling in the effort. Colonel Vindes, who was lying under a tree, his AKM at ready, called to us and we ran back parallel to the bank, keeping low. At a secure distance from the fighting we recrossed the swamps reaching the side where the exchange of fire had begun. UNITA regulars were waiting for us with a prisoner captured earlier that afternoon, barely 400 meters from FAPLA defensive lines. A desperate, thirsty man in a large, shapeless uniform waited motionless inside a hole. He was clearly afraid when he saw us.

"They are not South Africans," pointed out the the officer in charge of operations. "They're European journalists." Luanda radio, echoed by much of the Western media, was saying that the South Africans had intervened at Mavinga. If they had, they must have been carefully hidden





— none of us saw any SADF troops or aircraft.

Savimbi admitted that South African medical units were deployed to help his forces, and it is known that intelligence sections were working alongside UNITA. Huge quantities of war materials were also supplied by Pretoria. "There wasn't a single SADF soldier on this soil," Savimbi was quick to point out. "We had enough of our men, and we did not need that kind of help; we did not request it, and, in any case, South Africa was not prepared to give it."

Actually, UNITA had all the army it needed — well-directed and highly motivated. The events of this last offensive show that UNITA is indeed able to do the job alone, even when they find themselves up against aircraft, armor, Russians and Cubans.

We had one more demonstration of UNITA's combat prowess while following a rolling attack on the northern bank of the Lomba. Leaving the prisoner with a rearguard patrol, some UNITA infantry headed through the bush, RPG-7s and AKs ready for

action.

At the ambush site the sections split up, taking cover behind trees and concealing themselves inside previously dug holes. Not a single man was visible in the darkening bush.

The radio alerted us — "They're coming." Suddenly small-arms fire erupted from all sides. FAPLA had been hit 50 meters from our positions, a textbook ambush. The noise was deafening as rocket-propelled grenades slammed into the BRDM-2s and BTR-60s spearheading the troops. The vehicles replied with a spray of machine-gun fire.

At last the firefight died away. The FAPLA troops had disengaged to rejoin their main force leaving 17 killed and one BRDM destroyed.

So ended the battle for Mavinga. It had turned out to be one of the most severe defeats of the pro-Soviet forces in the Angolan war, which in 1985 entered its 10th year. Of the four FAPLA brigades which had marched down two months earlier "to a certain victory against the bandits," less than

500 men remained, according to Brigadier Bock. The Russian advisers had been evacuated by helicopter immediately after the beginning of the retreat. A junior officer, a Captain Sciagas, was left in command with the dubious task of avoiding annihilation.

Still, the future is far from certain for UNITA. "During this offensive in Mavinga and in Cazombo we lost very few officers but many experienced soldiers," Savimbi told us. "Ten of our troops were killed in action, and 832 were wounded. And the escalating Russian involvement shows that Moscow has chosen the line of military force to solve the Angolan riddle, and wants to test if the West is willing to resist or not. One of the aims of the Soviets is to discourage the U.S. government from getting involved after the repeal of the Clark amendment. I know that there is growing sympathy toward our cause in the United States, but we need support, and especially more sophisticated weapons to resist the new offensive we're certainly going to face." ✕

PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY

Marching From Mao to the Modern Era

by Paul H. Williams



THE People's Liberation Army (PLA) donned a new mask for all to see on 1 October 1984. Chinese armor clanked down Chang'an Avenue, between the reviewing stands on the walls of the Forbidden City and the half-million choreographed pompons massed in Tienanmen Square. As it passed Mao's tomb and the Monument to the Martyrs, the public got a chance to see ChiCom military might for the first time in more than a quarter-century.

The PLA has had little to crow about since its hollow triumph in rolling up the Tibetan resistance 25 years ago. And the PLA had fallen under a dark cloud for its ambiguous posture during the last years of the Cultural Revolution and the brief tyranny of the Gang of Four. In using the military display to keynote the PRC's 35th anniversary celebration, Deng Xiaoping and his

The PLA uses a locally manufactured version of the Soviet BM-21 122mm multiple rocket system. These 40-tube launchers have been in service since the 1970s.

CHINA SCHOLAR

Paul H. Williams got a taste of Asia during the 1960s the way many Americans did: He went to Vietnam. Williams served in the Marine Corps from 1965 to 1968 and pulled his Vietnam tour in 1966 and '67 as a scout observer with Delta Co., 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines.

After leaving the Corps Williams took up journalism and was an associate editor at the *Arkansas Times*. He recently spent a year in the People's Republic of China as an English teacher in Beijing.

politburo cronies were not only making a statement about the PLA's political "rehabilitation" but also showing off China's new military face, with the emphasis on the modern and the mobile.

But in order to understand the implications (and potential for success) of the changes in the PLA, we have to keep in mind its peculiar socio-political role during Mao's time and since. Although Mao cannot claim all the credit, the PLA was in many ways his most important achievement. It became the world's largest and most successful guerrilla army, able to replenish its ranks time after time, through defeats, massive retreats and debilitating hardships. And in the end, it was the PLA that had the continuity and support to overcome the feuding Nationalist parties and the army of the Kuomintang. There's no

arguing with that success.

More than pure brute size made the PLA unique among guerrilla armies. Since its inception the PLA was totally integrated into the social and political infrastructure of Maoism. Until recently, the army was regarded — and truly functioned — as an independent economic entity. Soldiers were fed from their own communal fields and the PLA published, and continues to publish, its own politically “correct” newspaper. Nonmilitary manufacturing was encouraged within the PLA’s regiments, many of them turning out paper umbrellas and panda T-shirts, in addition to water pumps and machine tools. The PLA was even at the center of Maoist art, each garrison being required to maintain a theater troop for the production of “Red drama.”

The PLA was forged in xenophobia, called nationalism, and tempered by Maoist ideology. Never well-equipped or -trained, the ChiCom army’s main strength has always been its size. The United States came to see what pure numbers can mean in traditional ground warfare during the Yalu offensive and the grim withdrawal from Chosin during the Korean War. Human wave attacks and the terrors of Chinese “brainwashing” were the two most common horror stories our troops brought home from Korea. And both are earmarks of highly indoctrinated, poorly prepared armies like the Maoist PLA.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) the PLA remained a relatively stable force in the social anarchy that raged across the Middle Kingdom. Officially, the army endorsed all Mao’s ravings, but in practice it kept largely clear of the Red Guards’ purges. Logistics collapsed along with the control of the central government. Army units were virtually cut off in their own country, having to rely more and more on their own produce for subsistence — they became little more than peasants scratching out a meager existence. At the same time the PLA’s ranks swelled to more than 4 million as the army became an increasingly attractive way to escape Mao’s political rampage.

Despite its pauper status the PLA was still the most cohesive and powerful single entity in China. The Central Committee, locked in the ideological struggles of Maoism, did not want to see such a powerful entity as the PLA enter the arena (as it did, briefly, during the fall of the Gang of Four). Therefore, it was to their advantage to keep the army weak, primarily through neglect.

But a series of bungling border skirmishes with Vietnam in the late 1970s escalated to costly “punitive incursions” by the Chinese in the ‘80s and forced the bickering leadership in Beijing to face the reality of the Red Army’s miserable condition. Enter Deng Xiaoping.

Deng found the old PLA very much in Mao’s post-1955 image: bloated with rhetoric and unwieldy. Deng, a more pragmatic man, saw the need to restore and restructure the PLA. Among the few official positions Deng has reserved for himself since 1978 is



China’s defensive strategy depends on making an invasion an expensive proposition for the enemy. These ballistic missiles are part of that deterrent.

CHINA’S VIETNAM LESSON

Still gimpy from some spare Chinese metal I brought back from I Corps in 1967, I couldn’t escape the irony of being invited to the reviewing stands at Tiananmen for the beginning of the People’s Republic of China’s 35th anniversary celebration.

Edging through the crowd in front of the section reserved for highly decorated PLA veterans, I stepped on a foot and muttered, “*Laojia*.” Excuse me.

“It doesn’t matter,” the Chinese lieutenant said in English. I turned to look at him. The shoe I’d stepped on was at the end of a stainless-steel leg.

My Chinese was wretched, but his English fair, so the lieutenant and a few of his pals talked off and on throughout the morning with me.

Lieutenant Chen Daoyi had lost his leg to a Vietnamese mine in 1980, but he still held a post as clerk in the PLA. Cautious and politically “correct,” Chen laid the blame for his wound on the Gang of Four, although they had been out of power for more than three years when he lost the leg. The reason, he said, was that the army had been so neglected that they went into combat armed only with the false confidence of their ideology. His briefing on the day before he hit the mine was several hours of inspirational passages from the thought of Chairman Mao.

Much of the ChiCom hardware that rolled by looked to me like cast-offs from *The Sands of Iwo Jima*, but to the PLA troopers it was dazzling. As the vulnerable-looking wheeled APCs

passed, Chen said to me, “If we had those, it would have been good.”

Somehow I doubted that the APCs would have made much difference. Chen’s war stories all seemed to involve massed assaults on fortified positions.

“You lose a lot of men that way,” I said.

“Yes,” he said, “all of mine.”

Without radio contact or air cover, Chen’s platoon had been sent, without maps, through several kilometers of jungle to take a Viet OP, somewhere near Hekou in southern Yunnan. His story was as vague as I’ve written it. He didn’t know what became of his platoon. Walking point, he hit the mine. He and the two troopers who evacuated him in a litter were the only ones that returned.

But Chen was quick to point out how different things are now. They have more rifles today, he said, automatic ones. Plenty of ammo, too. Fifty rounds per man, 100 on patrol. Soon everyone would have leather boots.

I asked about training.

His job, he said, was to schedule units for retraining. He proudly announced that that year (1984) 100,000 would receive two weeks of what amounted to AIT — a whopping 1/30th of the PLA would receive *part* of the training that every U.S. soldier takes for granted.

If the PLA wants to perform up to the standards of even most Third World nations, it will have to increase the quantity — and quality — of training given to soldiers in the field. Only then can they shed the howling horde image and present the Soviets and their Vietnamese cronies with a credible defensive posture.



Chinese Type 69 tanks pass in review during an armed forces parade in Beijing.

command of the army. It is the only one he has never offered to surrender.

What Deng accomplished in less than seven years is nothing less than a total re-trenching. But even such a miraculous face-lift has not given China anything like a truly modern army. Starting at the top, Deng has systematically replaced old Maoist officers — many in their eighties and some virtual illiterates — with men whose credentials come from their service records and not the “correctness” of their Party line. He has reduced the size of the PLA by nearly 1 million, often mustering out entire units that have prospered in collective farms and businesses. He has insisted on modernization of training, tactics and weapons and has introduced new uniforms with rank insignia and strengthened the chain of command. His aim is to turn the PLA from a lumbering, ideological statement into a competent fighting force.

So far as can be gleaned from “open house” training demonstrations at the PLA camp near Tianjin and conversations with PLA veterans from the Vietnamese front, training and tactics have changed swiftly and dramatically within the PLA since Deng’s rise. Small-unit tactics rather than the *Little Red Book* are now the basis for all initial training and most of the retraining takes place in staging areas such as Kunming, near the Vietnamese border. The notoriously weak garrison discipline of the PLA has been strengthened.

The PLA has a tradition of personal bravery, but none of professional competence. Its use of mind-control indoctrination may prove able to overcome much of that lack, but a likely side effect may be greater regimentation without an accompanying increase in imagination, producing martinets of mediocrity. Even Deng is cautious about too much originality . . . unless it be his own.

SOF got a chance to see the PLA’s new look firsthand. While much of the military exercises at Tianjin was a crowd-pleasing dog and pony show — mock bombing runs, massed machine gun demonstrations, blasting a gutted truck with a recoilless rifle — the assault demonstration was impressively well-rehearsed. Mortars and automatic weapons laid covering fire for squad rushes as a company enveloped on a hilltop objective. These troopers were even drilled to slide one hand to the butt of their AKs when using the stock to break a fall. Small things on the surface, but they indicate a degree of thoroughness not before associated with the PLA.

This emphasis on small-unit expertise was further reinforced in May 1985 in a series of articles appearing in the English-language edition of *China Daily*, purporting to have been written by a Chinese journalist with the PLA along the Vietnamese border near Youyi Guan.

I won’t go so far as to say the articles were bogus, only that their intent was clearly not reportage. Naturally, they described PLA successes, but in details that highlighted ingenuity, discipline and training.

For many of us, the ambush-counterambush warfare discipline the articles described is a familiar tune. The *China Daily* series spoke as though the PLA had written it although hard evidence contradicted that suggestion: I saw young PLA vets around Kunming with mangled feet and legs and tales of Viet booby traps. The Viets are the professors of bush warfare in East Asia. They have been giving the PLA a laboratory demonstration in that kind of fighting for a half-dozen years now, although the PLA’s leaders would like the world to think it is really *their* experiment.

Regardless of how well the Sino-Vietnamese confrontations are going for the PLA, the Chinese are certainly getting a lot of experience that never came out of their forays into Korea or Tibet. Current leaders see the value in this and seem content to learn their costly lessons in the valleys and passes of southern Yunnan.

Weapons, too, have been a severe problem for the PLA. Mao’s “Great Leap Forward,” followed by his rift with the Soviets and the subsequent Cultural Revolution, decimated China’s industrial capacity. They turned out fewer weapons of poorer quality, all based on obsolete Russian designs. And even today, with industry boom-

ing, attention is turned toward consumer and export goods. Many PLA units are not issued real rifles until they reach combat staging areas. Much of the arms display at the National Day parade in 1984 was designed to dilute that fact.

Deng arrived in a Red Flag convertible bigger than a pre-OPEC Lincoln and addressed his only public speech of the day to the PLA, then took his place on the Gate of Heavenly Peace to accept their salute. The first unit to pass in review was a troop of women security guards in powder-blue uniforms looking for all the world like a high school drill team. Only the machine pistols slung across their fronts belied the benign image. But there were few other foot soldiers in this paean to the modern, mobile PLA.

The military display was only 15 minutes of the 2½-hour parade, and most of it was unremarkable: truckloads of soldiers in their new uniforms; freshly painted APCs, both wheeled and tracked; several batteries of long-barreled artillery; ranks of T-59-type tanks with white sidewalls on their main drive cogs.

Until the final few minutes, the stress was all on conventional, mobile firepower. Given China's more than 3,000-mile border with the Soviet Union and the fact that the north is the only direction from which China has ever been invaded and conquered, the implication to the Russians was clear. We, Deng was saying, have enough armor to sow the border with dragon's teeth, from Vladivostok to Xinjiang, from the Pacific to Afghanistan.

While China has forsaken its role as the ideological leader of the Third World during the past decade, they continue to support some of the insurgencies close to home. Cambodia is an obvious example, but a less well-known hot-spot reaping ChiCom aid is Afghanistan. Beijing is justifiably jittery about the thought of being encircled by Moscow and its minions.

I got some unexpected information on the subject from an even more unexpected source — the Chinese. A student of mine, a Uigur from Xinjiang, was from a town near China's border on the Wakhan, the strip of Afghan territory that runs between the USSR and Pakistan. He was describing for me how Xinjiang had absorbed various bits of language and culture from its central Asian neighbors. This comes from here, and that from there, he was saying. I pointed to the corridor on the map and said, "And that is where the guns go into Afghanistan, right?"

BELOW: Reconnaissance vehicles in the parade point out China's desire to move toward a mobile military machine.

BOTTOM: Chinese Type 59 130mm field guns. These monsters are a direct copy of the Soviet M-46.

"Yes," he replied, anxious to get on with his travelogue. The rest of the class fell dead silent, and he realized he had blown it. "Well, actually," he said, blushing, "I don't know anything about that. Nothing."

I of course believe him.

The finale to the military parade, however, produced quite a few raised eyebrows and at least one real surprise.

The SAM missiles were passing and I had moved over into the section of stands next to mine where a large group of PLA vets, most of them old-timers from the Long March, were seated. A few of them spoke a little English and were anxious to practice it, particularly when they learned I had also been in Vietnam. But when they all suddenly turned their eyes on the parade, I knew something was up.

What I saw looked like a cross between a hyperthyroid Stalin Organ and an MLRS (Multiple Launch Rocket System). One of



the younger vets volunteered that this was the first time any of them had actually seen this piece of equipment, although it had been widely rumored. What made it special was an alleged "electric map" it had onboard, which I took to be some sort of land navigation system such as is found on the MLRS. But the tubes were mounted on the bed of a Liberation Lorry with an open crew compartment; I can only conclude that

the rumors were just that.

A battery of SAMs mounted on portable launch stands made of geodesic triangles also caused a stir among my PLA comrades — these too were new to them.

Next came several varieties of cruise-type missiles. No surprise in themselves, but when one rank of them passed by on unusual launch stands, it set up quite a hubbub. These cruise missiles had naval mark-

ings, I was told. I know next to nothing about the Chinese navy, but the demonstrated effectiveness of the French Exocet against modern thin-skinned frigates in the Falklands was obviously not lost on the Chinese. These high-tech buzzbombs are the great levelers in modern naval warfare, in case the Russians hadn't noticed.

Like a series of exclamation marks, the last weapons to roll across Tienanmen were

MEEK OR MIGHTY?

Howling hordes of drum-beating Chinese pouring over the Yalu River into northern Korea. This was the last glimpse of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) given to the United States, a view that has often lent an off-color patina to U.S. perceptions of Chinese military capabilities. Besides the largely unopposed conquest of Tibet in 1950 and a punitive expedition into northern Vietnam in 1979, the PLA has done nothing to afford a new assessment of what Chinese military might could come to mean. But what is a potential adversary up against?

It depends on the enemy. Mao tried to define possible international threats by dividing the world into three theaters — the so-called "Three Worlds." The United States and the USSR comprised the first world, Western Europe, Japan and the other industrialized nations formed the second while the developing nations, including China, made up the third. Naturally, this world view has been subject to modification depending on Beijing's relations with other world powers. During the Sino-Soviet alliance from 1950-1957 the socialist/imperialist dichotomy played the most important role in Chinese political thought. Now that a post-Mao reality has forced Beijing into a modified position, the Chinese have bunched the Soviets into the imperialist camp, calling them the most vicious and dangerous of all because of their relatively recent and unsophisticated entry into the hegemony game.

These considerations have always colored the PLA's defense posture. During Mao's tenure China viewed itself as the "ideological leader of the Third World" and tried to peddle its influence throughout the underdeveloped world, particularly sub-Saharan Africa. Since Deng Xiaoping has held sway, Beijing has slacked off on Third World revolutions to the point where China has forsaken all Asian communist insurgencies except the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. Fear of the Soviet Union has replaced ideological expansion — a trend that has been calculated to bring China closer to the United States.

Because of China's limited arsenal of

strategic weapons, she has been forced to formulate a strategy calculated to make any invasion by a foreign force an expensive proposition. China has had the hydrogen bomb since 1967 and has already deployed intermediate-range ballistic missiles in various points within the heartland, but their use is calculated within a retaliatory framework.

If invaded, Beijing could muster as many as 10 million fighters, most of them from a partially trained militia. Although most of them would ultimately end up as cannon fodder, they could make an invader's security problems formidable. As the enemy penetrated farther into the interior, they would be forced to engage successive positions of PLA forces.

Naval forces would play a part in harassing the invader's seaborne assault and logistic lines, particularly with submarines. However, since only the United States or the USSR is capable of such an invasion, it is unlikely that the PLA navy would survive for long.

Deng Xiaoping was quick to recognize the hollow power of the Chinese military under Mao. One of his Four Modernizations hopes to bring the military onto the level of other developed nations by the year 2000. The plan is twofold: bring the training level of the PLA into line with that of a modern military and upgrade equipment to support that increased capability. The first part of the plan is largely concerned with undoing the political indoctrination that had been pounded into the PLA's collective brain by hardline Maoists. Now it is straight training and tactics that occupy a Chinese soldier's time. The second part involves upgrading weapons, both with their own limited technology and by buying arms from other nations, mainly the United States. For security reasons Washington has been reluctant to sell anything but logistic and dual-purpose technology to Beijing.

Today the PLA is still largely a defensive force which embraces all arms and services, including the naval and air elements. Unfortunately, the PLA lacks the facilities and logistic support for large-scale operations at any significant distance outside its organized 11 military regions (MRs) within China. Each of these MRs is broken down into 28 mili-

tary districts. All of the main force units in all the MRs are controlled by the Ministry of National Defense, a cumbersome apparatus that takes most of the military authority away from the local commanders and puts it in the hands of the central government in Beijing. That process certainly solves any potential problems that might result from a huge, unruly military, but it isn't conducive to quick decision-making by local commanders in case of an invasion.

Infantry units account for most of the ground-force manpower — 119 out of some 158 main force line divisions. There are only 12 armored divisions, a situation that Deng would dearly like to correct in light of the mass of Russian armor lined up on the Sino-Soviet border. But for the foreseeable future the PLA will continue to use its incredible pool of manpower as the main deterrent to invasion. The army boasts 3,160,000 men broken down into 35 armies. Most of these armies are made up of three divisions, one artillery regiment, one independent armor regiment and, sometimes, an anti-aircraft regiment.

PLA armor spans the entire range of Soviet equipment from ancient T-34s (mostly for training and units in China's interior), to their own Type 69, a model introduced in the 1970s. The Type 69 is obsolete by Western standards and it must be assumed that China has a new tank under development, if not already in service.

The People's Republic of China will continue on its course for modernization, a journey that will separate her from the Soviet Union by an ever-widening margin. Beijing wants a military that is fit and ready to handle any threat, and they want a series of quasi-alliances that will help to offset the Soviet menace. But the Chinese will always be Chinese. Since the dawn of Eastern civilization the Chinese have regarded all foreigners as inferior, an attitude that has not changed much over the centuries. During this new period of relative tolerance for things foreign, the West has found itself in a position to walk through the Chinese door for the first time in over 100 years. But as in the past, it could slam shut at any time.

— Dale Andrade



Blue-uniformed women make up one of the PLA contingents as they pass by the reviewing stand.

the ICBMs, including the long-range, three-stage monster that had put China's communications satellite in orbit. They were also easily capable of delivering an atomic payload on the Kremlin.

China is still a land of startling contrasts, where the satellite this missile launched delivers TV programs to peasants still dragging wooden plows behind water buffalo, where laser technology is in the world's first rank but they cannot produce a ghetto blaster that doesn't suck up tapes like spaghetti. So the real level of sophistication in their military hardware is still open to question.

What is certain is that the PLA is a revitalized army. After all, it is one of the key targets in Deng's Four Modernizations policy. Its training and weapons are being rapidly upgraded and there are now high-level talks being held between the U.S. and the PRC on the question of military exchanges. Given the PLA's renewed status and the progress China is making in other areas under Deng Xiaoping's programs, there can be little question that the army, with its size and ideological zeal, is shedding its Maoist ineptitude and feudal tactics in favor of becoming a *forcé* to be reckoned with on any scale.

Yet, all things being equal, the PLA is still far from a match for conventional Western forces. It lacks supplies and weapons, logistical support, and the kinds of initiative and professionalism that have marked dynamic armies since the Battle of Jericho.

But the PLA is no howling horde of pig-tailed, opium-crazed men storming around with meat cleavers. It must be taken seriously. Events on China's southern border will likely tell us just how seriously. ✕

TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE

Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province in southwest China, is best known to most of us as the home of the Flying Tigers in WWII. Today it's about as close as a roundeye can get to China's ongoing "border dispute" with Vietnam. It's close enough to know that there's a war going on.

The attitudes of the people here are a lot more hardnosed toward the Vietnamese than they are a thousand miles away in Beijing. Young soldiers on the streets of Kunming smile without showing their teeth, especially the ones with a sleeve or trouser leg pinned up. There were a lot of war stories behind those half-smiles.

On the 36-hour train trip from Kunming to Beijing, I had plenty of time to engage my train mates in conversation. One PLA officer, who was returning from the camps near the Vietnamese border, had conducted training exercises in weapons and small-unit tactics. He spoke no English and my Chinese is serviceable but slow, so much of the conversation went through a Frenchman who spoke both well. What follows is, therefore, considerably edited.

His name was Gao, and he was a pro. He had been in the PLA for more than 20 years, as had his father before him. He was opinionated, talkative and straightforward — unusual traits among the Chinese when dealing with foreigners and almost unheard of for a member of the PLA. He had a lot to say about the fighting with Vietnam and about the PLA.

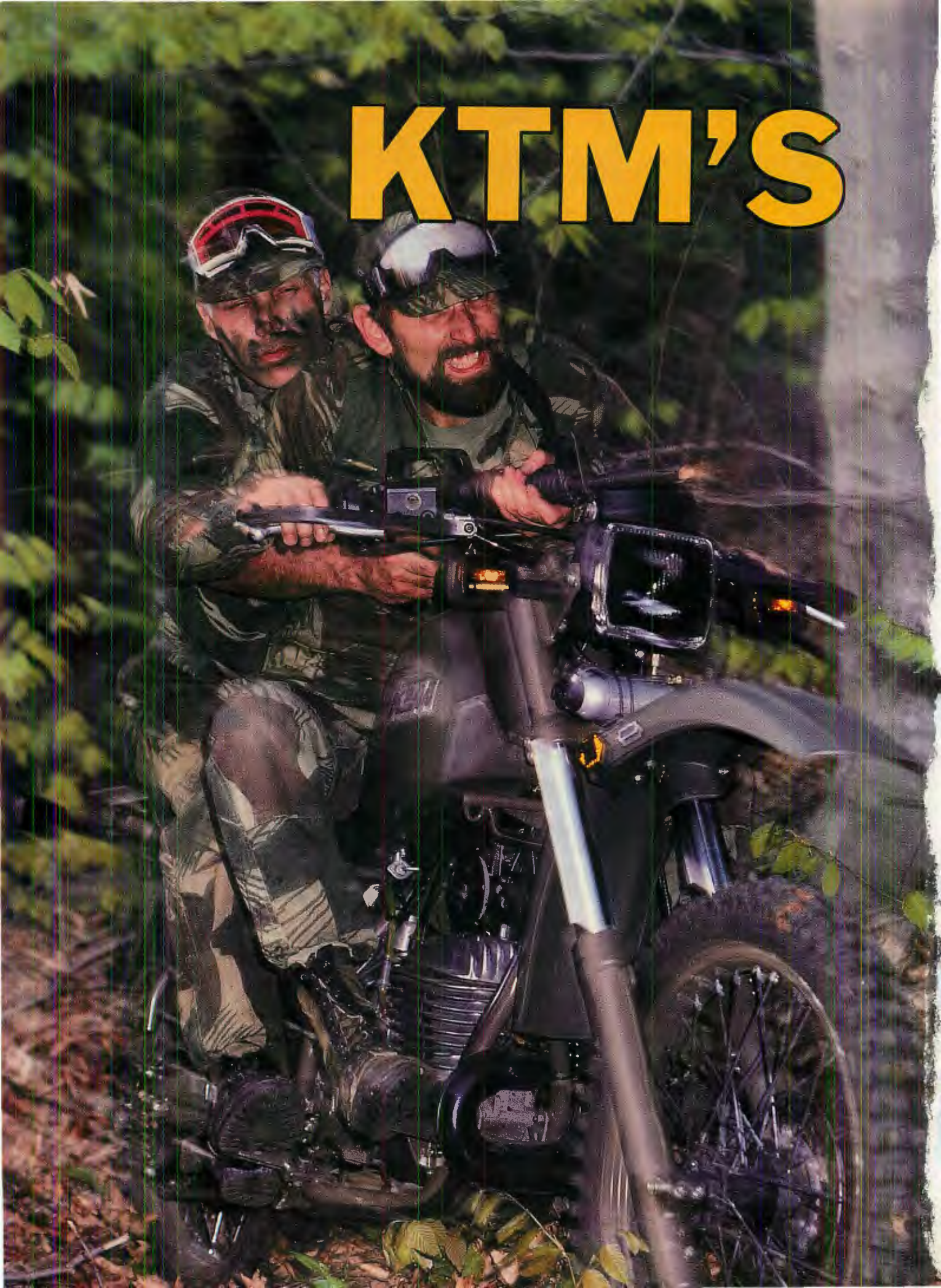
On Vietnam: "There is no dispute over the border; the fighting is all political. The Vietnamese want to embarrass China, so our Asian friends will think we cannot help them. But if we make it costly for them, it will help our friends in Cambodia as well. Also, the Vietnamese

can use China to frighten their own population into believing there is good reason to ruin the economy to support Vietnam's aggression in Southeast Asia. That's what they are doing, right? Selling high-quality rice abroad and buying cheap rice to feed their people. With the profits, they buy more guns. They rely on a wartime economy, and they are encouraged in it by their patrons, the Soviets. Isn't that right?"

On the PLA: "Before [Vietnam] the training was very bad. Some soldiers would go years without firing a rifle. They knew how to grow pigs or rice, but not how to shoot. They only knew "charge," and that Mao said the Red Army could never be defeated. Feudal attitudes die hard; for too long we did not learn from Western armies. Unfortunately, we began learning from Vietnam. But I have studied Castro and Tito — Tito was pretty good, right? — and I've read Che. Mao could move men, but he was not really a soldier, not a good one. Now we are learning from the Afghans and the Nicaraguans — everyone. We will never fight another war like Korea."

On his work: "I am a trainer of trainers. Small weapons — rifles, RPGs, machine guns — and how to use them as a unit, that is what I teach. Did you know that some soldiers used to knock the sights off their rifles, because they said they couldn't see over them? In a people's army, discipline is not easy; if someone is older, you assume he is your superior. It is hard to break this habit. But field commanders must also show initiative, they cannot always wait for orders. This is also hard to break. I tell them [the unit commanders] that soldiers will do what they are trained to do. If all they know is to believe in Mao or in the Party, they will die in that belief. But if they know how to fire and advance, they will live."

KTM'S



TWO-WHEELED WONDER

FRV Cycles Back to Battle

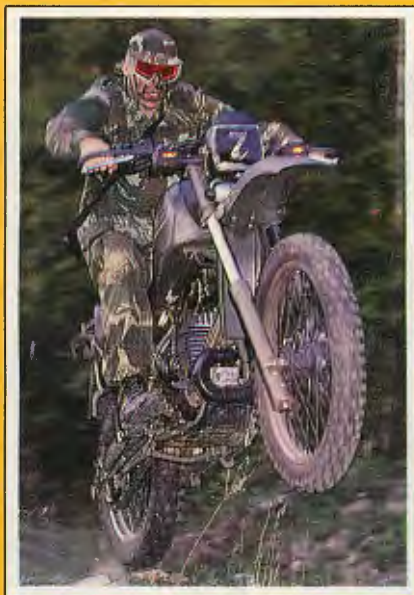
Text by Francine Ditta and Debbie Percival

Photos by Alex Erisoty

EVEN serious motorcycle enthusiasts might not recognize the OD-green fast reconnaissance version of this rugged-terrain wonder. But then they spot the KTM logo. To dirt biking pros, this means first-class winning equipment. The Austrian manufacturer's military version of its cross-country racing motorcycle — the Fast Reaction Vehicle (FRV) — is sister to KTM's "White Knight" that rocketed Heinz Kinigadner to the 250cc World Motocross Championship. While the handmade KTM is known to Americans primarily as a racing machine, the Austrian army quickly recognized the tactical potential of its military version, the FRV.

Now military planners in the United States and some Latin American countries are catching on, tipped off by the motorcycle's proven speed, maneuverability and reliability over terrain too rough for any other vehicle. Military police and battlefield

Continued on page 81



The combination of speed and firepower make the KTM FRV a worthy addition to a recon inventory.

The KTM Fast Reaction Vehicle at parade rest.



KTM FAST REACTION VEHICLE (FRV) SPECIFICATIONS

KTM model 250cc, reed induction, Military FRV . . . \$3,150

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

- Standard clutch, five speed, gear driven
- Olive drab color
- SEM ignition (100-watt capacity)
- Exhaust System: Double-walled pipe, packed interior space, large-capacity muffler (72dba)
- Air-cooled engine, 26hp at 6,200rpm
- Seat height: 35 inches
- 20.7-liter gas tank
- Wheel base: 58 inches
- Standard weight: 238 pounds dry
- Quartz headlight
- High breather air box system
- Fenders and gas tank: High impact plastic
- Tires: (Front) 300x21 Metzler; (Rear) 450x8 Metzler
- Brakes: (Front) Hydraulic disc; (Rear) Large conical drum
- Right side leather radio carrying box
- O-ring chain
- Speedometer and trip mileage
- Center and side stands
- Rear foot pegs
- Rear suspension: Single shock unit
- Suspension range: 250mm
- Front end: Telescoping hydraulic fork, 250mm range
- Starting system: Manual kick lever
- Foot shift

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

- Automatic clutch
- Hot grips
- Bush guards
- Spiked tires
- Ski package

SADF'S PATHFINDERS

The Best of Airborne's Best

Text & Photos by Ken Gaudet



AIRBORNE units are the elite shock troops of every country's armed forces. And within that elite you'll find a group of men whose job it is to be the best at what airborne does: Hit the ground, secure the area, and make contact with the enemy.

The South African Defence Force (SADF) is no exception.

From September 1980 to September 1981, I served with the SADF 44 Para Brigade Pathfinders — a small, then newly formed unit that was comprised of 95 percent foreign personnel who all had as much as three years' combat experience in Africa fighting terrorists. Many of us had been on combat jumps in Mozambique and Zambia, and we knew how to handle ourselves under hazardous situations.

And, as is usual in the military, they didn't quite know at first what to do with us.

I don't think SADF realized the extent and quality of training we would be bringing with us to the Pathfinders. Recent African



South African Para Battalion beret badge, Pro Patria Medal and South African para wings.

"Para" board of the SADF 44 Para Brigade Pathfinder Company. Center insignia is the unauthorized emblem for the Pathfinders; other wings represent the United States, France, Israel, Canada, Britain and Rhodesia.

service aside — mostly Rhodesian Special Air Service (SAS), Selous Scouts, Rhodesian Light Infantry (RLI) and other specialist units — Pathfinder applicants had come from Commando/Ranger-type units in Britain, France, the United States, New Zealand and Australia. We were nearly all para qualified already, and one of our sergeants from Rhodesia had over 60 operational combat jumps.

But we all had our own reasons for continuing the fight against terrorism in Southern Africa. Some came for the money — a



1,500 rand bonus at the end of the contract — and some wanted to commit for a one-year tour with SADF instead of the normal three years the Rhodesians had offered. Others wanted to fight communism, and still others just wanted to fight. Most of us had signed on while still serving with the Rhodesians, and we wanted to carry that fight on inside Angola or Mozambique.

SADF's 44 Para seemed the best assignment to match our desires, and a job with the Pathfinders looked even better. SADF took this all in stride and told us if we completed our selection courses and para school, we would then be able to train as Pathfinders.

We hung around for some time with only a vague knowledge of just what our job would be in the Pathfinders. Finally our unit commander (for security reasons I'll call him "Colonel Carpenter"), along with a South African captain and a former British and Rhodesian SAS man who would be our sergeant major, arrived to sort us out.

Simply put, Col. Carpenter wanted a small group of elite paras who would carry out all his dirty tricks-type missions. That called for a special breed of soldier, so along with his company commander and sergeant major, the colonel devised a selection course to weed out all the BS artists and armchair warriors who had applied for the unit.

Our sergeant major interviewed each man personally to find out why he was there,

Sergeant McNulty of the Pathfinders fires a Rhodesian-made 9mm submachine gun with a single-point sight.

what military skills he could pass on to the others, and just who was trying to bullshit their way into the unit.

While I was in Africa practically everyone was — or said they were at any rate — an ex-British Commando, Ranger, Green Beret or SAS military specialist. As the training started the liars fell by the wayside, and the real soldiers began to emerge.

A training site was selected in northern South Africa (security considerations still preclude giving its exact location), and after a group of about 25 potential Pathfinders assembled, we were briefed on what was expected of us during the next two months.

Because we were first up to bat our initial selection courses were mostly trial and error, but we were told that heavy emphasis would be placed on the physical as well as mental aspects of selection for the unit. And, since we would be working in small groups of four or five men and behind the enemy's borders, teamwork would become an essential part of our lives. Any old rivalries from other wars or countries were to be left behind, and we were told to forget who was a Yank, Brit or Rhodie. We were now, or hopefully would be in the future, all members of the Pathfinder Company.

Our first day on selection started out early

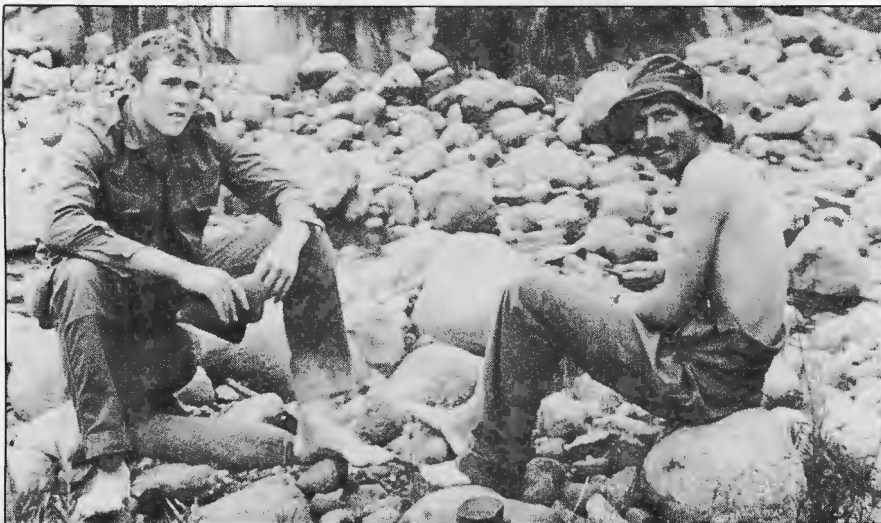
with a physical training regimen most of us were familiar with: Each man selected a different exercise and led the group in executing it. A short run followed, then breakfast, and then serious training began at 0800.

We were all introduced to "The Box," a 35-kilogram (77-pound) wooden crate of 7.62 ammo. Each potential Pathfinder carried his own box, rifle and battle gear to the shooting range about three kilometers away.

We trained on the range until midday, and then humped back to camp for afternoon classes. If you were smart, you'd shot up all of the ammo in your box so you wouldn't have to carry the damned thing back.

Believe me, that first day kicked everybody's ass — mainly because our sergeant major believed in extensive live-fire exercises. One of the main techniques was the anti-ambush exercise in which all team members immediately laid down a base of fire toward the "enemy's" position. Then, by using the odd-even number system of fire and movement, the troops would rush forward until they were in grenade throwing range. Our next drill was to throw a grenade and assault the enemy, firing as we moved.

We practiced the bloody thing over and over again until it all came naturally — and until we were about ready to drop. It was a good confidence builder, though, and



TOP: Multinational Pathfinders — Yanks, Brits and a Canadian. Author stands in the center.

ABOVE: Author (right) and fellow Pathfinder take a break for a much needed brew up.

LEFT: Drakensberg Mountains in southeastern South Africa make or break potential Pathfinders during their last week of course selection.

BELOW: Last day of selection. Those who survived won the maroon beret of the Pathfinder Company and went on to operate in South West Africa and Angola.

helped hone our aggressiveness. Only after a minor accident in which two members of a group were slightly wounded by a short-thrown grenade did we tone down our training a bit: We switched to homemade concussion grenades.

As our training progressed, we also switched over to the standard South African 5.56mm R4 rifle from the 7.62mm FN most of had used in Rhodesia. During the first couple of weeks we used the FN as an all-purpose weapon and the R4s for familiarization, and were also issued AKMs for our use on external raids.

Pathfinder training increased in intensity from September to late October. We learned the South African way of doing things, but were also able to integrate a lot of what we'd brought with us when it seemed to work better. Basic and advanced patrolling techniques, land navigation, ambush and anti-ambush drills, bush survival and tracking — all the normal infantryman's skills — were drilled into us until they became second nature. Selection of drop zones for the paras and landing zones for helicopters — key aspects of pathfinding — were also drummed in until they too came without much thought.

We carried out mock daylight raids on our makeshift villages, and a host of intelligence gathering training. Emphasis was placed on how to sneak in as two-man teams, get the information, and get out again without being seen.

One of the nicer aspects of all this came after the first few weeks when we were able to get rid of our dreaded 77-pound ammo boxes. You still had to hump it around if you screwed up — late for formations, dirty weapons or the like — but it was a hell of an incentive to get yourself squared away.

During our final training days, though, we had one more encounter with that box. We were sent on a timed 10-kilometer run with one ammo box between two men, and it was a bastard no matter how you carried that heavy son of a bitch. It just wouldn't sit right. My partner and I started out with a wooden pole to hold the box on our soldiers, but by the end of the race my buddy and I were lugging it on our backs in 100-meter intervals to the finish line.

Finally, after completing six weeks of pretty intensive training, we all loaded up on trucks for two days in Pretoria before going to jump school. Since everyone in our group had been previously para trained, all we had to do was go through a five-day refresher course. During training we made seven jumps from DC-3s — the "Daks" most of us had come to know in Rhodesia — and C-160 Transalls, and were rewarded with our South African para wings and beret badges.

By now, our Pathfinder selection course was down to 12 men from the original 25 or so. Those who hadn't been able to cut it had transferred out to other units.

Then came our final phase of the selection course — seven days in the Drakensberg Mountains in the southeastern



area of South Africa. The Drakensbergs were known locally as the Dragon's Back, and we soon found out why.

The basic idea was to move from point A to point B in a specified amount of time. Each member was to carry his rifle, rations for seven days, water, medical and survival equipment — all of which was to total at least 30 kgs (66 pounds). In addition, one of our infamous ammo boxes would be carried between two men; between three men, two boxes would be carried.

Before we began this final phase, a former French Foreign Legionnaire and some South African army types decided they wanted to come along, complete this part of Pathfinder training, and then make up the rest of the selection course. They didn't want to wait for the start of a new class, and needless to say, they didn't last the first kilometer.

The Drakensberg Mountains stand almost vertical, crossed with long, steep valleys, and the trails — when you can find one — are only wide enough for one man to walk. The newcomers dropped out, but two months later they finished selection after training for it.

After the first day my two teammates, a former U.S. Army Green Beret and a vet of the Brit Paras, and I found ourselves doing a precarious balancing act on the side of the Drakensbergs. Our legs and shoulders screamed under the heavy weight of our gear, and it didn't take much to ask ourselves, "Just what in the hell are we doing here?"

Certificate for Pro Patria Medal awarded to the author for service in South West Africa and Angola for actions against SWAPO terrorists.

I'd been through three airborne courses, Ranger and the 82nd Airborne Division Raider schools, and had spent 18 months with the RLI Recce Troop pulling fire force and other ops inside Rhodesia, Zambia and Mozambique. My fellow American had completed Special Forces training and the associated snake-eater courses, and our Brit counterpart had been to British and Belgium para and survival schools.

To put it mildly, we didn't need this shit. After much loud grumbling and bitching we made some tea and hot rations, then we got pissed off enough to say, "Fuck 'em! We're gonna finish this course!"

After three days of walking, and 50 kilometers later, the back-breaking ammo boxes were taken away from our group and the emphasis was placed on speed marches. During these pain-wracked days, the remainder of us on the selection course came closer together and worked hard as a tight-knit unit. If a team lagged behind during one leg of the mountainous course, another team would stay back to help them catch up. I'd seen it happen before in other ball-busting schools, and it helped forge a sense of camaraderie within the unit which we'd never lose.

After finally reaching one checkpoint at about 0200, we were told to go back up a particularly long, steep hill and report to one

of our cadre there. Due to our physical condition that little jaunt took nearly two hours, and then we were told to head back down the hill for further instructions.

We reported in, dead beat and near complete exhaustion, and were then run through a series of physical training exercises — all the while singing songs. The South Africans call this "getting a rev," and it was designed simply to mess with our minds and make us quit. Luckily nobody dropped out.

Later, our orders were to move back to the original starting point and await further instructions. At best this would have been a 10-hour hike, but in our exhausted physical condition it could take up to 24 hours. That night a fierce storm came up and the course split into two groups. Two other men and I put up our ponchos and got some much-needed sleep. About five hours later, the trek resumed.

In courses like this you reach a point where the brain slips into neutral and the body just functions. You stumble up the hill, and you stumble down the hill — but you keep moving. When we stumbled into our last checkpoint, our sergeant major sent us on a five-kilometer run with full packs. It was all we could do to just keep moving, but we did.

When it was all over, we were met with a shot of whiskey and congratulations. We had passed Pathfinder selection, and we had won our maroon berets. We were now operational, and there was a war to be fought. ✕

ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY

When Irish Ire's Upon You

by James W. Grant

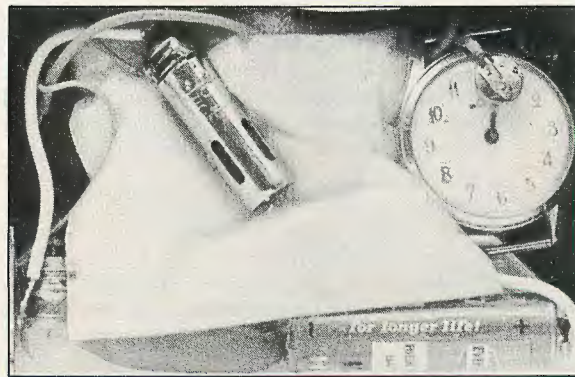
GOOD news is relative at Force Control and Information Center, Royal Ulster Constabulary Headquarters, Belfast. The good news — if you could call it that — came first.

"The preliminary figures are in for 1985," the briefing officer announced. "Kneecappings are down from 26 to two, compared to the same period last year. Tar-and-featherings have dropped to zero, and the number of terrorist-related explosions has fallen from 193 to 28."

No one had to mention the bad news. The British army presence is slowly but surely dwindling in Ulster Province, which is Northern Ireland. As a result of Westminster's ongoing withdrawal plan there are now only about half of the approximately 20,000 troops sent in 1969 to the six violence-ridden counties that comprise Ulster — home of the Irish Republican Army.

The unanswered question, given declining British army manpower, is whether the local police force, the Royal Ulster

Photo below shows an incendiary bomb built into plastic tape cassette box which was defused by RUC personnel. A hole has been drilled in watch crystal so soldered detonation wire makes contact with minute hand, which has been scraped free of paint to make a solid connection. Photo courtesy Royal Ulster Constabulary



MARINE-WRITER

This is the *Soldier of Fortune* debut for James W. Grant, 27, who is seeking to launch himself as a full-time journalist. Grant was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps in 1985, following a five-year tour as a communications officer. He has been published in regional magazines and trade journals in New England. Welcome aboard!

Constabulary (RUC), can deal with regular crimes while also coping with IRA terrorism.

The chief constable acknowledges in his annual report that no one yet has an answer. The report said 1985 was a year "of significant progress." Yet "an extremely difficult policing environment" remains. Despite a still-prominent military presence, terrorism occupies an inordinate amount of regular police resources,

Terrorism on parade. At a Saint Patrick's Day Parade in New York City, a member of the Glasgow Republican Brigade shows his true colors. Photo: James W. Grant

the report said. To make matters worse, "the depressed economic situation exacerbates criminality generally."

Throughout my stay in Northern Ireland I asked many members of the RUC Force Control — from key leaders down to the rank and file who walk the beat — if local lawmen were up to the increased demand. Their answers were tempered with a caution honed by years of political stalemate and sectarian violence; their confidence was unmistakably sharp. But then every day the RUC faces problems most police departments contemplate only in worst-case scenarios. No wonder RUC's investigative and intelligence gathering techniques are considered to be some of the most sophisticated in Europe.



For the cop on the beat, however, sophistication is not as vital to survival as gut instinct. Since 1969, when *terrorist* violence escalated, 221 police officers have been killed and more than 4,800 injured. Many of the injured are permanently disabled. These figures are for an enforcement area the size of Connecticut, with a population of about 500,000.

Given this, what does it take to be a constable in Northern Ireland? Applicants must be between 18 and 30 years old. A sound general education is required. Good physical health is an obvious necessity. All personnel must be either British or Irish.

Like police departments the world over, though, there are unstated requirements. A heavy dose of genuine concern for their community and a willingness for personal sacrifice are big pluses for members of the RUC. Obviously rough duty.

The RUC was established in 1922, roughly the same time Northern Ireland was created in a British partitioning of the Emerald Isle. From the beginning, RUC's Force Control had double duty. Not only did it have to provide the type of law enforcement protection familiar to all police departments, it also had to protect the citizens it served from frequent armed subversion originating inside and outside its borders. RUC managed the task until 1969 when a dramatic increase in terrorism prompted the landing of British troops.

But a review of police decorations since the coming of the regular troops makes it clear that the constables are no less in the front lines of this shadow war than soldiers: 10 George Medals, 76 Queen's Gallantry Medals, 73 Queen's Commendations for Brave Conduct, 5 Queen's Police Medals and 22 British Empire Medals. This is the largest list of awards for any police force in the United Kingdom.

To be fair, though, there are two other groups fighting terrorism in Northern Ireland besides the RUC and the British army.

One is a Special Air Service contingent — exact number classified — which works in uniform and plain clothes. Little else about the SAS presence is known. It is believed the SAS came to Northern Ireland in 1973.

The other is the Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR), formed in 1970. Similar to the U.S. National Guard, the UDR is a reserve unit of the British army staffed by about 8,000 of Ulster's men and women. Like the RUC, this reserve regiment will play a security role of growing importance when the regular army is gone.

So who are the enemies of this multi-layered law enforcement and defense echelon? Conservative estimates peg the number of paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland at 15. The Irish Republican Army is the most well-known.



The IRA began in 1919 as a broad-based coalition composed of people opposed to the British Crown retaining rule over the northern counties after independence was granted to the rest of Ireland. Violent IRA reprisals against British rule were for decades sporadic and poorly organized. But this began to change in the late 1960s with increasing outside help. Organized violence grew and with it internal dissension about what the IRA's future should be.

In 1969, after a heated debate, the IRA split into two separate factions, the Official IRA and the Provisional IRA, or Provos. The Officials were more concerned with socio-economic issues and a political philosophy loosely based on Marxist doctrine. They declared a

ceasefire in 1972, which for the most part has remained in effect. The Provos believe the sole cause of injustice and violence in Ulster Province is the presence of British troops. They focus more on a military solution. The Provos are blamed for the Birmingham bombing spree of 1974, its first major assault against British rule in which 19 people were killed and 198 injured. The 1978 fire-bombing of the La Mon Restaurant in County Down, killing 12 and injuring 26, is Provo work. Lord Mountbatten was killed when a Provo bomb blew up his sailing yacht. A Provo ambush of a British army convoy killed 18 British troops in 1979.



Several smaller splinter groups also operate in the Province. The Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) and the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) are two of the better



known. The INLA claimed responsibility for the 1979 Westminster car bombing assassination of Member of Parliament Airey Neave.

The IRA has a legal arm, Sinn Fein, which is Gaelic for "We Ourselves." As the IRA's public front, Sinn Fein is political in nature. Even Sinn Fein is split, with an Official Sinn Fein and a Provo Sinn Fein, the latter reflecting the hard-line stance of its parent group. But outsiders were surprised in recent elections at how many seats Provo Sinn Fein won on several of the Province's councils. Ironically, one newly elected official, Gerry Doherty, earlier served seven years in prison for attempting to blow up the very office he now occupies.

IRA members, which are on the Catholic side of sectarian arguments dividing Northern Ireland, aren't the only ones to



The L2A3 Sterling SMG is standard issue to constables in the Royal Ulster Constabulary.
Photo: James W. Grant

blame for violence. Protestant paramilitary groups have spilled their share of innocent blood. Probably the best known among such Protestant groups are the Ulster Freedom Fighters, the Red Hand Commandos, the South Orange Volunteers and the Tartan Gangs. One of

the oldest groups, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), was begun in 1912. UVF was revived in 1966, the sole purpose of its revival to kill IRA members. Prison sentences totaling 700 years were passed on 26 UVF members in 1977, all found guilty of murders and bombings.

Since 1969, terrorist groups in Northern Ireland are responsible for the deaths of 2,446 British soldiers, policemen and civilians. Uncounted thousands more have been injured.

Prior to the 1970s, an estimated 90 percent of

the guns and money used by IRA-related groups originated with Catholics of Irish descent in the United States. It is estimated that 15 million U.S. citizens have contributed to the IRA. While it is believed these contributions are decreasing, many U.S. citizens continue to aid the outlaw army. And the assistance is not just financial. Everything from high-powered bolt-action rifles engraved with woodland hunting scenes, to M16s and even LAWs, have been smuggled from Brooklyn and Boston to Derry and Belfast. In 1975 Congressman Les Aspin released a confidential Defense Department report stating that an estimated 6,900 guns and 1.2 million rounds of ammunition had been stolen from U.S. military installations between 1971 and 1974 by sympathizers of Irish militants.

IRA gunrunning increased beginning in 1971, when they began getting support from the Palestine Liberation Organization and ComBloc nations. Nearly five tons of bazookas, rocket launchers, hand grenades, guns and ammunition bound for delivery to the IRA were intercepted at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport. Official statistics indicate 73.4 tons of explosives, 8,711 firearms and 1,078,348 rounds of ammunition were confiscated between 1971 and 1982. There are no good estimates on how much slipped in undetected.

The Provos began training with the PLO in 1971, about the same time their first big arms deals went through. By 1972, IRA guerrillas were a familiar sight in Lebanon as well. Libya's Muammar Khadafi began contributing cases of Kalashnikovs to the IRA Provos. By 1980, Cuban instructors were formally teaching classes on the latest terrorist techniques in camps located northeast of Benghazi near Libya's eastern coastline. There is no indication that any of this international terrorist cross-training has ceased.

Four basic types of people fill Provo ranks, according to the experts. The first are intellectuals: well-traveled members who write speeches and set policy. They represent the IRA at fund raisers outside Ireland and exert a great deal of internal influence. Next come huge numbers of permanently unemployed, many disenfranchised through a longstanding Northern Irish practice that passes on jobs — excluding menial labor — from Protestant father to Protestant son. In larger cities like Londonderry, Catholic unemployment runs as high as 30 percent. Some Catholic families haven't worked for generations. As is the case with terrorist movements throughout the world, especially Europe, such widespread social ills make fertile recruiting ground for the Provos in Northern Ireland.

The third group is comprised of common criminals. Many feel these people would be out shooting and looting anyway, with or without the IRA. Finally, there are members who ironically want nothing but peace. Living with



British soldier armed with standard British army L1A1. Despite their reduced troop strength in Northern Ireland, heavily armed soldiers are still required to patrol the most sensitive neighborhoods. Photo: James W. Grant

Ulster Province violence probably is hardest for them. Provo recruiters make it quite simple. "Either you join and are with us, or you are against us, an enemy." Enlistment incentives for this group of people includes kneecapping for men, tar and feathering for women.

But when a constable is being fired on he doesn't have time to make socio-political distinctions. It's combat, pure and simple. From gutted shops to barricaded residential sections, the narrow, darkened streets are hard to navigate at speed and resemble nothing so much as an urban battlefield.

Graffiti taunts RUC constables and British soldiers. "Plant your own dope, bury a copper," reads one slogan. "Have you killed your soldier today?" asks another. Huge murals depict battles, past and future, and obviously required a great deal of time to paint. Painting them over can be a hazardous job, as snipers have proven time and again.

Patrol vehicles used in these areas — neighborhoods now known as "Bogside" and "Murder Mile" — are specially modified four-wheel-drive Land Rovers. Undercarriages are bombproofed with steel aprons, side windows covered with steel pierced by gun ports. Grates can be raised to cover windshields at a moment's notice. Strips of asbestos cover the hoods to prevent Molotov cocktails from igniting engine

compartments. Such modifications make police vehicles slow and cumbersome. And despite heavy armor, homemade 100-pound fertilizer mines can be lethal when command detonated beneath a Land Rover.

The favorite car for criminals in the province these days is the Volkswagen GTI: fast, small and agile in the confined city streets.

In the late 1960s, an advisory committee was established to consider the future role and organization of the RUC. One of the board's primary recommendations was that the force should normally be an unarmed service. This principle was implemented to a considerable extent until the beginning of the '70s when violence erupted anew. Today's constable is well-armed and well-trained. In addition to the standard Ruger .357 Magnum revolver, each man on patrol is armed with either a Mini-14 with Trilux night sight, or the long-time workhorse of the British army, the Sterling L2A3 submachine gun.

Constables in larger cities also carry riot guns which, if the situation merits, are used for crowd control. Both CS cartridges and plastic bullets are issued. The plastic bullet is a solid PVC cylinder weighing 5 ounces. It has an operational range of 30 to 70 yards and delivers 110 foot-pounds of energy at 50 yards. Constables must wear body armor while on patrol. Many also wear them while in the barracks.

Despite this firepower, the RUC's most effective counterterrorist weapon is human intelligence. The exact number is classified, but quite a few IRA leaders have



Dressed in a summer uniform, an RUC constable provides security at a local police station with an L2A3 Sterling SMG. Side arm is a Ruger .357 Magnum. Photo courtesy Royal Ulster Constabulary

been arrested based on information supplied by "Super-Grasses." These are individuals who were themselves arrested and cracked under interrogation. In addition to creating mutual mistrust within IRA ranks, it has critically damaged the terrorist command structure.

Of course, reprisals by their erstwhile comrades are severe for those who talk. One popular vengeance is to ventilate the kneecap with a Black & Decker variable-speed drill.

Despite its valorous history, the RUC is not without its own internal problems. Until just a few years ago the ranks were filled mainly with Protestants. But after the British government convened a series of commissions, the problems have been rectified to a large extent, including sweeping recommendations regarding the treatment and internment of prisoners.

Recognizing that the British army wasn't designed to cope with civil strife — especially among the Crown's own citizens — the number of troops in Ulster has

been gradually cut from about 20,000 to a current level of about 9,000. Certainly one factor in this reduction is the sagging British economy and political dissent in Great Britain. It costs about £1 billion (approximately \$1.5 billion) each year the troops remain.

But as troop levels have dropped, RUC strength has grown. Its manpower changed very little between 1922 and the late 1960s. But RUC recruitment since then has been given high priority. There are nearly 8,500 regular and 4,500 reserve constables now in service.

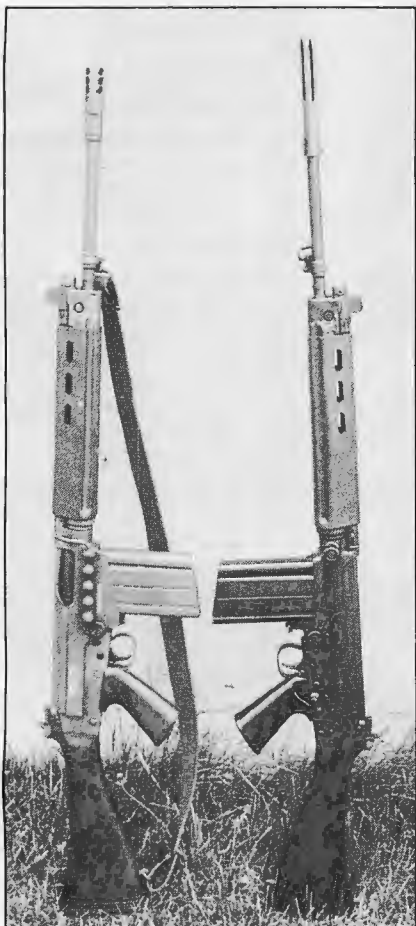
With this growth, training has evolved. Rudimentary programs in only the most fundamental law enforcement skills have given way to a curriculum that covers a widely specialized spectrum, from counterterrorism to forensic science to commercial fraud. Intelligence gathering has expanded to include sophisticated electronic surveillance techniques. But most important, RUC is continuing its transition from a once-mistrusted, exclusively Protestant institution to an effective, integrated force providing a quality of law enforcement on a par with that of any other department in the United Kingdom.

This is the highly charged situation today in Northern Ireland. And the Royal Ulster Constabulary is a civilian police force faced with an awesome, deadly task: to effectively cope with what is a bloody military stalemate. Their resolute, unwavering confidence is inspiring. For surely no other lawmen must daily face such a challenge. ✕



ABOVE: The Springfield Armory SAR-48 — every bit as good as the FN original but at a bargain price.

BELOW: The Brazilian M964 may be another copy of the metric FAL but it's just as good as the original.



Text & Photos
by Peter G. Kokalis

SOF WEAPONS

BRAZILIAN BARGAIN

FN Clone Matches its Master

MORE disinformation has been disseminated concerning Springfield Armory's recently introduced SAR-48 rifle than about the war in El Salvador. At one time or another, gun writing hacks have stated that this rifle is produced in the United States, the producer is an unknown FN licensee, Springfield Armory was established in 1777, the quality duplicates that of Fabrique Nationale, the exterior is phosphate finished only, the FN FAL is still the finest infantry rifle in current service, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Right. And Santa Claus is the exclusive distributor.

Springfield Armory Inc. was created by Elmer Ballance of the L.H. Gun Co. in Devine, Texas, between 1971-74 after the U.S. government arsenal of that name closed its doors. At this time Ballance was marketing the so-called "M1A," a semi-automatic-only version of the M14 rifle which incorporated an investment-cast receiver manufactured by Valley Ordnance of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and general issue components that had been dumped on

the surplus market for scrap value. Ballance had his fair share of problems with the BATF and Springfield Armory Inc. was sold to the Reese family and relocated to Geneseo, Illinois.

I first learned of Springfield Armory's plans to market a *Fusil Automatique Legere*-type rifle in 1984. Their original conception involved the purchase of a large quantity of surplus FN FAL rifles abroad, stripping all the components, discarding the receivers, and reinstalling the parts on a U.S.-made investment-cast receiver. Since FN did not view such use of its products in a kindly manner, this method of introducing a low-priced FAL was abandoned.

The Springfield Armory SAR-48 rifle is completely manufactured at the Brazilian government's Fábrica de Armas de Itajubá, part of the huge state-owned IMBEL arms complex, located in Minas Gerais. A former FN employee has informed me that Brazil never obtained a license from FN to produce the FAL rifle. If so, this remains of historical interest only, as patents on the 34-year-

old FAL design have long since lapsed. Licensed or not, by 1982 the Itajubá arsenal had produced over 200,000 of what the Brazilians refer to as the M964 rifle.

In general, the Brazilian M964, distributed by Springfield Armory, is an excellent copy of the metric FAL and every bit as good as the FN original. With a suggested retail price of \$899, the SAR-48 comes complete with sling, pistol-grip cleaning kit, two magazines, magazine loader, blank-firing attachment and bayonet.

The sling is far too short and is useless except for posturing about the parade ground. The front sling swivel pivots 360 degrees around the barrel as it should. Someone with combat experience should have suggested long ago that the FAL's rear sling swivel be moved from its position on the bottom of the buttstock to the top.

The tubular-handle, convex-bladed bayonet has a plastic scabbard and can be used for nothing but stabbing. It will, therefore, be thrown in the nearest ditch and replaced with a machete by all the *soldados* to whom it is issued. The tubular-type bayonet fits over the current 22mm diameter flash suppressor and grenade launcher combination which is internally threaded to accept the blank firing attachment (BFA). God knows what U.S. civilians will do with the BFA.

The flash suppressor, as well as all the other components except the rear sight assembly, front sight post, bolt group, forearm retaining screw and gas plug plunger have been finished with a black semigloss baked enamel over phosphate — the most corrosion-resistant combination for tropical environments.

Black plastic handguards, pistol grip (with oiler and nylon pull-through cleaning rod and bristle bore brush), and buttstock with rubber buttplate are not quite up to FN standards. However, the forearm's retaining-screw lock nut is a small, but decided, improvement.

But back to basics. Before we take a closer look at the Brazilian M964, let's briefly review the FAL's method of operation. Nothing revolutionary here. Gas-operated, FAL-series weapons fire from the closed-bolt position. After the bullet passes the gas port in the top of the barrel, some of the gas is diverted into the gas cylinder where it expands and drives the short-stroke piston rearward, which in turn strikes the face of the bolt carrier in the manner of the M1940 Tokarev rifle. The carrier moves back through ¼ inch of free travel, during which time the chamber pressure has dropped to a safe level.

After this free travel, the bolt carrier's unlocking cam moves under the bolt lug and lifts the rear portion of the bolt body out of the locking recess in the bottom of the upper receiver. The bolt and carrier then travel back together, compressing the recoil spring located in the buttstock of the standard model and in the sheet-metal receiver cover of the para model. The extractor withdraws the fired case, holding it on the bolt



The SAR-48 comes complete with sling, pistol-grip cleaning kit, two magazines, magazine loader, blank-firing attachment and bayonet.

SAR-48 (M964) SPECIFICATIONS

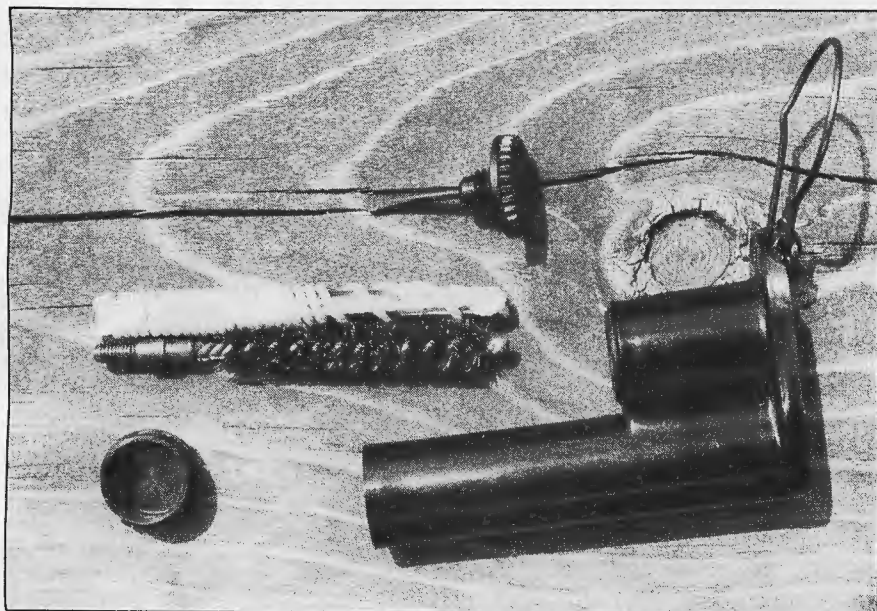
Caliber	7.62x51mm NATO (.308 Win.)
Operation	Gas with adjustable regulator and conventional piston. Locking by means of falling bolt which butts against locking shoulder in recess at bottom of receiver. Fires from the closed-bolt position.
Feed	20-round detachable staggered box-type magazine.
Weight, empty	9.4 pounds
Length, overall	43.3 inches
Barrel length	21 inches
Sights	Post-type front with protective ears; adjustable for elevation zero. Sliding ramp peep aperture rear with no protection; adjustable for windage zero and elevation from 200 to 600 meters in 100-meter increments.
Finish	Black semigloss baked enamel over phosphate.
Furniture	Black plastic forearms, pistol grip (with cleaning kit) and buttstock with rubber buttplate.
Accessories	Equipped with two magazines, magazine loader, pistol-grip cleaning kit, tubular-type bayonet and scabbard, web sling and blank-firing attachment. Lightweight bipod, \$102.70; standard scope mount with multiple eye release without rings, \$96; standard 1-inch rings, \$10.50/pair; 1-inch elevated see-through rings, \$16.30/pair; NATO-approved scope mount, \$128.70; armorer's tool kit, \$126; gas ring adjustment tool, \$13.80; front sight adjustment tool, \$11.90; Magazines: 20-rd., \$15.60; 10-rd., \$18.20; 5-rd., \$20; Rhodesian manual, \$11.
Price	\$899; Factory cutaway, \$682; Para conversion kit, \$454.
Manufacturer	Fabrica de Armas de Itajubá, Minas Gerais, Brazil.
Exclusive U.S. distributor	Springfield Armory Inc., Dept. SOF, 420 West Main Street, Geneseo, IL 61254.

face until it hits the fixed ejector and is propelled out of the rifle through the ejection port.

The recoil spring drives carrier and bolt forward, stripping the top cartridge out of the magazine and driving it into the chamber. After the bolt stops, the carrier con-

tinues forward a short distance until its locking cam rides over the bolt, forcing and holding the bolt down into the recess at the bottom of the receiver and against the locking shoulder.

There was some minor rust bleeding between the locking shoulder and the receiver



depressing its spring-loaded shaft with the nose of a bullet so the "A" is on top. Rotating the plug 180 degrees will expose the "G" and prohibit gas from passing into the gas cylinder so that it might all be utilized to propel a rifle grenade with a ballistite (blank) cartridge.

Springfield Armory Inc. has provided adequate disassembly instructions and there is no need to repeat these procedures, except to say that the gas piston and spring, gas plug and the interior of the gas cylinder should not be lubricated unless you're storing the weapon for Armageddon. Oil in the gas system will only bake into sludge and varnish that increases fouling.

The markings have also been removed from the front sight post, leaving no frame of reference other than two small dots. The sliding rear sight can be adjusted for elevation from 200 to 600 meters. The numbers 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are raised on the M964 and etched on FN FALs. The rear sight can also be adjusted for horizontal zero. The Brazilians have cut reference marks (not found on Belgian-made FALs) on the lower receiver and sight for this purpose.

The FAL's rear sight is unprotected, tends to wobble and must often be shimmed. Mounted on the lower receiver, it is too close to the eye. Yet, the Springfield Armory SAR-48 is capable of astounding accuracy. Three lots of M80 ball ammunition were fired through the SAR-48: PMC from the Republic of Korea, West German IWK 19-65 and Yugoslavian IK-83. All produced superb accuracy with benchrest groups averaging 1.5 to 2 MOA. One thousand rounds were fired through the SAR-48 with no stoppages.

All this with a sluggish 8.5- to 9.0-pound trigger pull weight. Very little can be done to improve a FAL trigger. If you remove anything but burrs, the system will probably go full auto on you. My advice is to learn how to grind your teeth in synchronization with the trigger's creep.

No doubt about it. The SAR-48 is a perfectly acceptable FAL at an attractive price. Although the FAL was adopted and used at one time or another by more than 90 nations, it has seen its day as an infantry rifle. By today's standards, it's too heavy, too long, too sensitive to dust and grit and chambered for the wrong cartridge. However, it beats its two major contemporary competitors, the M14 and the G3, by a considerable margin. It's still *the* 7.62x51mm NATO battle rifle against which others must be judged.

The SAR-48 will also be offered in a selective-fire version. Unless the target consists of a horde of 1,000 PLO terrorists at 50 meters and closing fast, this option is without merit in a 7.62x51mm caliber infantry rifle. If you want to ring gongs at 500 meters, then this is your rifle. For further information contact Springfield Armory Inc., Dept. SOF, 420 West Main Street, Geneseo, IL 61254. ✕

on SOF's test specimen, but the receiver body is a forging and that's good news. The receiver cuts required to accept the auto safety sear of the selective-fire model have been eliminated to meet BATF importation restrictions.

The FAL's operator-adjustable gas regulator has been retained. Working on an "exhaust" principle, under ideal conditions the major portion of the gas is passed through the regulator and out into the air. This system helps to reduce recoil.

If the correct procedure is followed, adjustment of the gas regulator is quite simple. Unfortunately, the instruction sheet provided with the SAR-48 is somewhat garbled on this subject. So, let's get it right. With either a FAL adjusting tool or the nose of a bullet, rotate the gas-regulator sleeve (located immediately to the rear of the front sight assembly) to the left until the gas port on top of the gas cylinder and in front of the sleeve is completely exposed. In this position almost all the gas is diverted to the

TOP: Pistol-grip cleaning kit includes nylon pull-through cleaning rod and bristle-bore brush.

ABOVE: Close-up of lower receiver markings.

atmosphere and when a round is fired short recoil will result (the hold-open will fail to engage). On older FALs, the number "7" on the sleeve would be on top in line with the bore's axis. Unfortunately, these gas sleeve numbers have been eliminated from both the FN LAR and the Brazilian M964.

With an empty magazine fitted to the rifle, rotate the gas-regulator sleeve to the right, one notch at a time, and fire one round only after each adjustment by inserting the cartridge into the chamber through the ejection port. When the hold-open finally engages, verify by firing several more rounds single-shot. As a safety margin, rotate the gas-regulator sleeve to the right by an additional two notches. Blaze away, but make certain the gas plug has been rotated by

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PANA JUNGLA

Surviving the Bush — Indian Style

Text & Photos by Ned Kelly



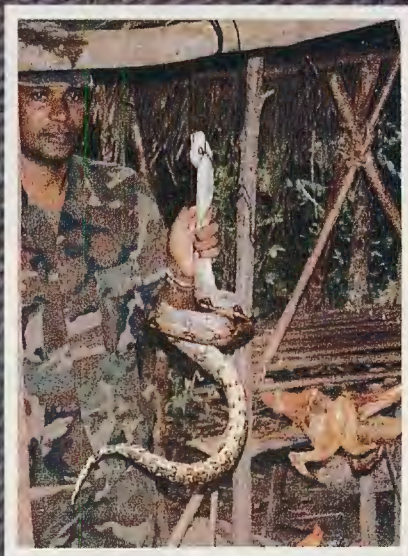
Pana Jungla patch. Two boas wrapped around a machete sum up the course.

Snake and chicken provide just two of the delicacies found in the Panamanian "J."

PANAMA'S Jungle School — *Escuela Pana Jungla* — is bloody tough, damned practical, and a really first-class survival school. It's not designed to teach you how to fight in the jungle, but to simply survive in what can be one of the toughest and most hostile environments in the world.

It's a four-week school and takes place in the jungles of Panama's Fort Cimarrón training area. I was surprised to learn that about half of the Panamanian instructors are native Indians from up-country tribes who still manage to eke out a living from the jungle.

The first week's classes of the Pana Jungla are all conducted in the open air of the jungle classroom, and the remaining three weeks are spent surviving the Panamanian jungle. Training started with a PT test — one mile with boots in six



minutes or less, a minimum of 40 pushups in a minute, and 40 situps in a minute — just to make sure we wouldn't keel over our first day in the jungle. And then the classes begin in earnest.

First up is basic field expedient shelter construction, critical in ever wet and rainy Panama, using totally native materials that you'll be able to find in the jungle. This is followed up with another very basic basic they teach for survival — good old-fashioned fire making. Lighting a fire boy-scout style in the soaking wet is one of the most physically exhausting things many a Pana Jungla graduate has ever had to do. What's more, the buggers even make you build a little house for your firewood to keep it up off the wet jungle floor, and to shelter it from the constant rain.

Our Indian instructors taught us how to pick out both a good hardwood and a fine softwood from the jungle, the idea being to put the softwood on the bottom and use the hardwood as a friction fire starter. We started out using wet balsa on the bottom which I didn't for a minute expect to ignite at all. The hardwood was good mahogany, and it took a good 45 truly exhausting minutes before we got even enough heat to make a little bit of spark to try and light the kindling. That, pal, is hard work.

Next they showed us how to find that all-important lifesaver in the jungle — water. We started by chopping down a banana tree, making the cuts about a foot off the ground. The hollow stump quickly filled up with sap which we promptly scooped out and dumped. We did this fill and dump process four or five times, then finally took the water out and drank it. We hadn't used that initial sap because it's very heavy with banana oil. That's an excellent laxative, so unless you want the shits, get rid of it.

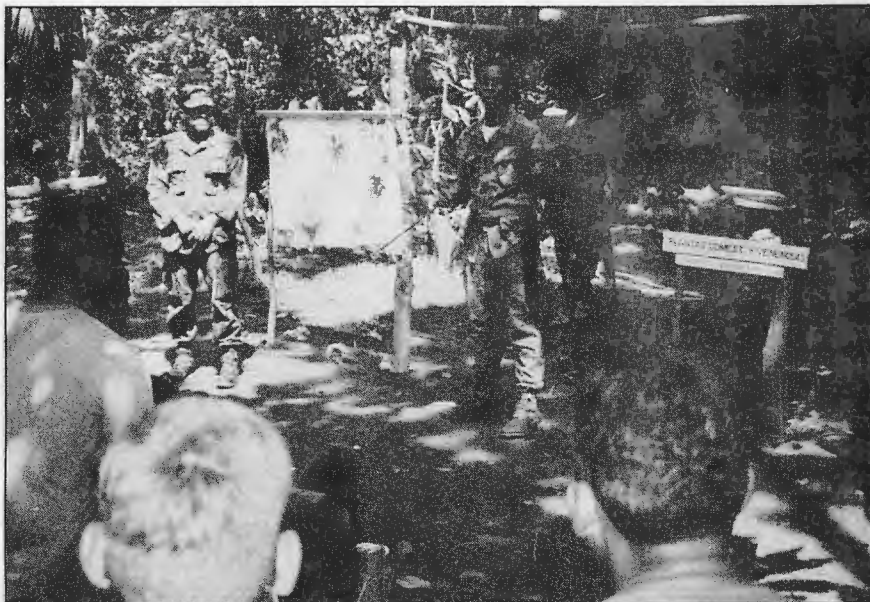
There were other plant sources in the jungle from which you can also get water, one being a vine which belongs to the same family as regular grapes. Vines vary from about 2-8 inches in diameter, and you first cut it through on the top above your head. Then, the very second you cut the vine anywhere below that first cut, drinkable sap starts to drip out. The water has a slightly woody taste, but it's not bad.

We then got our introduction to the infamous coconut milk. We cut open some coconuts, and the milk was so clear that you'd have thought it was water — if you didn't know better. We put it in our canteens to drink later, but it ended up fermenting on us. Trust a colonial to find booze in the jungle; that was one of the most intoxicating liquors I've ever had.

With liquid requirements satisfied, we turned our attention to classes on the different varieties of traps and snares — noose-type traps, falling cages, etc. — all built out of native jungle materials. After the class, of course, we naturally had to go out and build them ourselves.

One particularly interesting trap we put together was called the Bird Cage. Cut fibrous bark into strips and then twist the strips together to make a rope. Indians use it to build their houses which supposedly last for years. By laying out your bark rope in an X pattern, and then by tying a couple of stakes to it, you build something like a four-sided pyramid with twigs running up the top. The bark rope keeps tension on the twigs and holds them in place. Then you just continue to stack them like you're building a log cabin. You then make a trigger — a figure-four device — on which the cage is resting and attach bait to the trigger. Once the trap's been set and camouflaged in a likely place out in the jungle, an animal pops in, grabs the bait, the cage falls, and bingo! You've got lunch.

Travel through the jungle became the next focus of our attention, and one of the



Panamanian instructor — many of whom are native Indians — points out what's available in the jungle "supermarket."

PANAMA'S POLITICAL GUARD

Panama's National Guard — now comprised of about 10,000 paramilitary and police troops, and small naval and air force units — without doubt constitutes the most important political force in Panamanian politics.

The Guard's formation stems directly from early United States foreign policy and involvement in Central America. After an abortive Panamanian army coup d'état in 1904, the United States insisted on the formation of an apolitical police force under U.S. control. By 1910 the *Policia Nacional's* strength hovered around 1,000 men — and received its commands and directives straight from Uncle Sam.

This status quo was maintained until 1932 when José Antonio Remón Cantera was appointed to command the force. Cantera wrested the National Police from U.S. domination and, by 1953 with a strength of 3,000 men, the force evolved into the present-day National Guard which is tasked with internal security operations and specific defense functions.

The Guard's biggest strike into the political arena came in 1968 when a junta — whose central figure was Colonel Omar Torrijos Herrera — overthrew last-term President Arnulfo Arias Madrid and took control of the government. Within the next decade the Guard's strength grew from about 4,500 men to 8,000 — 1,500 of whom were engaged in military operations with the remaining 6,500 involved in police functions.

Torrijos was vested with extraordinary powers as "maximum leader" of

Panama, and the National Guard flourished under his rule. Civilian control was reinstated in 1978 with the election of Dr. Aristides Royo — Panama's current president — but the general staff of the Guard retains a constitutionally mandated role in the government's decision-making process.

After Torrijos' death in 1981 there was intense jockeying for power within the National Guard structure between senior officers who had attended conservatively minded military academies in pre-1968 Nicaragua and El Salvador, and others who had trained in post-1968 Mexico, Venezuela and Peru with their social-reformist outlook. A quick succession of National Guard commanders came to an end when Colonel Florencio Florez assumed control of this potent political-military force — a post he still holds today.

The Guard's most important component is its army contingent numbering some 9,000 officers and men broken into the Presidential Guard, seven light infantry companies and one cavalry squadron — most stationed in or around the capital. Panama's small navy presently numbers only 500 men and about a dozen small surface craft while the air force, another 500 men, exists primarily for its helicopter and air transport capability.

Stemming from the treaty signed by Jimmy Carter and Torrijos in 1977, a quantum leap in Panama's military force can be expected — with the United States acting as the primary supplier of materiel — as Panama assumes full responsibility for Canal defense and operations on 1 January 2000.

— John Coleman



best ways of getting from A to B is by floating. We were taught how to make field expedient flotation devices from jungle materials, and we built squad-sized rafts, log rafts and one-man armpit rafts. Native instructors showed us the trees and we made the rafts. Softwoods, like balsa, make the best log rafts, but gringos can confuse floaters with sinkers, so it's best to learn the identification tables and look carefully at the leaves.

Raft classes gave us something one doesn't often find in military schools: fun. Heavy rains had swollen the river and it ran fast throughout its course. After we finished building rafts, it was time for the graduation exercise. We had to live through a trip aboard our constructions. Except for our camouflage and living green walls towering over whitewater, we were like tourists in the Grand Canyon.

While on the subject of water, we did take

TOP: U.S. Army officer from the 193rd Infantry Brigade (Panama) tries his hand at the log-and-bow method of fire starting. No easy task — especially with wet wood.

ABOVE: Shooting the rapids on field expedient rafts. Panamanian National Guardsman (right) keeps afloat using a "pit" raft which locks under the shoulders.

a little time out to go fishing — with bootlaces — to supplement our diet. That was interesting because of the 30 blokes on the course, I think there were only three or four guys who caught anything. One of them caught three fish — catfish or something like it — and he later won the Jungle Man Competition at Fort Sherman's Jungle Operations Training Center. I guess he just found the right spot.

Since fishing was rather poor, we also had quite a few valuable classes on plants and foods to be found in the Panamanian

jungle. Classes were held in a small garden they maintain at the school in order to give students hands-on training with the real thing. They had a huge table loaded with local foodstuffs set up where we could try all the different taste treats available in the jungle market.

Occasionally the instructors would send us out on a nature walk to find and bring back the various plants they were teaching us about. They even had us search out a plant that looks just like sugar cane but with a much softer body. The biggest difference, though, is that its effect is just like taking an amphetamine. Our instructors said you take a small piece, chew it up and swallow the juice, and it's almost like speed. But they warn you that even in an escape and evasion situation you shouldn't take more than one or two small pieces in a 24-hour period. Any more than that and you will most probably start urinating blood. A most unnerving thought.

Another jungle medicine they showed us comes from a tree which secretes a caustic sap when you make a cut into the bark. It burns if it gets on your skin; however, they said if you take the sap, strain it through a handkerchief and swallow one tablespoon, it will kill all the parasites in your system. Apparently one teaspoon of the same burning sap would kill any parasite in the system of a small child. I had my doubts and didn't try any, but the instructor was an Indian and his information had been passed down through generations of jungle livers. Who was I to argue?

We finally became so familiar with the jungle that during breaks between classes we'd dash off to find fruit. We'd return to the next class with all our pockets full and chow down all through the next period. The instructors didn't seem to mind; they were pleased, in fact, and said it showed we were starting to get into the swing of the jungle.

One of the more important tools we used during our forays into the bush was the machete, and our instructors went to great lengths in our training on its proper use: What are the best sharpening stones and the correct technique for honing the blade, and how to clean the rust off it with dirt or sand after days in the humid jungle.

That machete business was a trying part of the school. At one stage they had us make canteens out of bamboo. Instructors would give you a nice big chunk of bamboo, then you had to cut it down to size and delicately smooth it out — and all that with a bloody great unwieldy machete! Would they let you use a handy-dandy little knife? Oh, no! A knife is not strong enough to cut bamboo. Bamboo you have to chop. And, if you make the slightest mistake the stuff splits and you start all over. I think I went through about eight pieces of bamboo before I got it right. We finally graduated up to making heavy-duty canteens which consisted of three or four big pieces of bamboo about 3 feet in length, all lashed together with a field expedient shoulder harness. From that point

onward we carried our water around in a bamboo backpack.

From canteen making we were introduced to the fine art of jungle butchering. We killed iguana, chicken, snakes and a goat, paying close attention to the animals' vital organs. A sick animal's meat can make you the same way, or worse, if you don't know what you're looking for in the liver and other internal organs.

When the Panamanians begin their instruction to the students on animals, they start the classes with a boa constrictor — quite alive, and quite unhappy to be hung by a noose around its neck. With a razor sharp machete the instructor scores the skin all the way around just below the boa's head, and then makes a slit right the way down the abdomen. Brother boa's skin is then pulled down and off like an old dirty sock. Why do they skin it alive? Because that way you don't lose any of the blood from the meat, and blood is an important salt substitute which is absolutely vital in a hot jungle survival situation. The only animals we killed before dressing them out were the goat and the chicken. We hung the goat up by its hind legs and then cut its throat, careful to catch all the blood as it drained.

Chicken killing — jungle style — consisted of pulling its wings around behind its back, similar to holding a human's arms back so that the elbows are touching at the spine. Then you deliver a karate-type chop to the spine between the base of the wings. What that does is break the spine, rupture the nerves and collapse the lungs. When you drop the chicken on the ground, it wiggles around for a couple of seconds and then it's dead. You don't lose one drop of blood.

Skinning this bird proved to be just as interesting. Our instructor made a small incision at the base of the throat, and then you can put your mouth straight to the hole or you can insert a hollow reed or a small tube. Then you simply inflate it and watch the chicken blow up like a balloon, insert your fingers into the hole . . . and rip! You end up with all the skin, feathers and everything, without losing any vital blood.

Our first week of classroom work was rounded out with land navigation training using only the sun and stars to guide us. It was coupled with instruction on the different universal distress signals used for attracting the attention of overflying aircraft.

The Panamanians were also careful to impress upon us the problems of trying to deal with Indians in the jungle. We were told that Indians would be most hospitable should we stop and ask for directions; the general direction would be pointed out and the number of days' travel to that destination accurately recounted for us. However, if that Indian advised you three days, you should not be too surprised to find that you were still not there after even four days or more. The reason? Indians give distance in terms of days traveled on horseback rather than on foot! The idea was to be very clear in



Fast food in the jungle. Goat's blood provides an excellent source of salt and other nutrients during a survival situation.

your questions and to be sure you fully understood their answers.

And, when trading bits and pieces of your now worthless kit to the Indians for what has become invaluable food — to you anyway, in your somewhat reduced circumstances — don't be an ugly American jungle tourist. If you're too generous, you'll become the reason for inflationary jungle prices and the next gringo E-and-Eing his way through that forgotten corner of the world will pay the price for it. If you're too cheap, you'll go hungry — simple as that.

At last we were ready to go about the task of surviving for three weeks in the Panamanian jungle. We were dropped off in small groups on a mountain range about 25 miles out of camp. Our instructors stayed with us, but not to help out in any shape, form, or

fashion. Nooo! They were there only to evaluate us, and to render assistance should a medical emergency arise.

First they took away all of our gear — rucksack, load-bearing equipment, rifle, and any little goodies you've hidden away to eat. You're then issued with a machete, a small knife, and a file with which to keep everything nice and sharp. And that's *all* you're allowed to take.

Things got pretty basic during the next three weeks. If you didn't build a shelter you didn't stay dry, and if you didn't catch your food you didn't eat. The area we were dropped into was fairly well-stocked with jungle goodies, but you really had to look around to find any of it. Any number of food-crazed troops had been through the area before us, so it wasn't exactly virgin bush.

One gringo on our course was already the

Continued on page 84

TURN back the clock.

The time? It doesn't matter. Time is how you measure it.

In Israel during those hot summer days of 1948, time was measured by the number of planes and weapons smuggled into the country from different parts of the world. One of these planes was the Flying Fortress, the B-17. To me the B-17 was 74 feet of lady, every inch of her; faithful if you were good to her. She looked like nothing on the ground, but assumed a breathing, lithe beauty once she was airborne. She could be trusted to get you where you wanted to go and then get you back home again. She was stubborn, too — only a direct hit could stop those four 1,200 HP engines from turning.

That's where we came in. A few Americans flew for the Israeli *Kheyl Avvir* (air force) and risked their lives in that country's war-racked birth during the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948-49.

We American B-17E crews took delivery of the three old bombers in Miami Beach. We were all young, all combat veterans of World War II. The B-17s had 6,000 miles of flight in front of them. Steel-girded in their war armor, they — and we — were going to war again in the Middle East. The bomb-bay doors were still working; the bomb control panel, racks, wiring controls and fittings were all in tiptop order.

Turn back the clock to that long flight as mile after mile of ocean passed beneath the wings of the three B-17s.

Each bomber had three or four pilots for the long trip. The four in our plane tossed a coin to see who would be captain. Ron Conway won the toss. David Goldberg, Norman Novak and I would be co-pilots.

I was sitting next to Conway, watching his hands on the wheel. I stirred uneasily. What was that? I listened, but there was no break in the hum of the engines, nothing

SOF HISTORY

B-17s OVER CAIRO

A Yank Fights for Israel

by William Lichtman

indicating trouble. Yet something was wrong.

"Guess I'll have a look around," I said to Ron, and gave him a playful nudge as I got up. I worked my way aft, opening the door leading into the bomb bay. Nothing there, but still I could . . . I could hear it again!

A strange whistling . . .

I moved ahead carefully, pausing every second to listen hard. The bomb-bay doors were tightly shut. Yet it sounded like air escaping, or, I thought, air rushing in. I checked the cockpit. Windows closed there, too. Then I bent down and lifted the bulkhead door that led to the greenhouse — the navigator-bombardier's compartment. Now I heard it more distinctly: a shrill, hissing, angry whistle. I grunted, getting down on all fours, and stuck my head through the small entrance to where the navigator

OPPOSITE: The war went well for the Israelis. These Sherman tanks were captured from the Arabs during the early days of the war. Photo: Author's collection



Both men and women joined in the struggle to make Israel a nation. Photo: Author's collection

WINGED WARRIOR

When William Lichtman turned 17 in 1941 he enlisted in the Royal Air Force and flew Spitfires and P-51s in Britain's air war against Germany. In 1942 he became a first lieutenant in the U.S. Eighth Air Force serving with the 4th Fighter Group, again over Germany.

After WWII Lichtman returned to the skies to fly for Israel in the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948-49. When that was over, he "bummed around the world," sometimes flying as a commercial pilot for El Al and sometimes as a bush pilot in Alaska.

Lichtman also tried his hand at writing. He is the author of *Between the Star and the Cross*, a work on the importance of Christian and Jewish foreign volunteers in the first Arab-Israeli war.

The author shows off his B-25 before the flight to Israel. The deal later fell through. Photo: Author's collection





squats. Then I saw it.

Halfway out the Plexiglas window, which the bombardier used to watch the effect of his bombs, hung Nathan Yankner,

our navigator-bombardier. Somehow, when he'd stepped on the fragile Plexiglas, it had broken under his weight; now he was being whipped through space, his lower

FIGHTERS OVER THE MIDDLE EAST

To this very day many feel that the Americans, both Jewish and Christian, who went to Israel to fly as volunteers for that fledgling country were nothing but drifters who missed the thrill of battle. They are all too readily dismissed as "soldiers of fortune." In fact, these young men opted for combat despite threats that they would lose their American citizenship by fighting with the regular armed forces of a foreign country. The cause was more important than mere mercenary instincts.

Why did they do it, this band of Americans? Most would tell you they were tired of seeing Jews getting kicked around. The newspapers were full of stories about Arab threats that they would drive the Jews into the sea. More than anything else those threats made the men mad. They wanted to help the underdog.

The United States had about 350 men serving in Machal. So numerous were the Americans at the mess that I thought I was back in the United States Air Force. Practically all the volunteers were in key jobs, nearly one-third of them Christians.

Americans weren't the only foreigners in infant Israel — Canada provided 454 men, Britain and France provided 500 men. About the same number came from South Africa.

Not all of the pilots flew bombers or fighters. There weren't that many planes to go around. Some of the men flew small Piper Cubs from a unit known as the Negev Squadron which was based behind the Egyptian lines at Kibbutz Dorot. They flew countless missions over desert convoys headed to Jewish settlements. With a Sten gun on their laps and a bag of grenades at their side,

they would dodge fast-flying Egyptian Spitfires in a deadly game of tag around citrus groves. A number of these brave men died flying over the Negev, a few were shot down and plunged into the sea of Galilee. These men earned the respect of the pilots who flew the larger and faster stuff.

The glory boys of Machal flew old Spit 9s and P-51s against the Egyptian Spit 16s and other up-to-date British prop-driven fighters. Usually they tackled heavy odds.

In a dogfight you were alone — suddenly alone. It was an extraordinary thing. Until then you had been in a formation, but you never fight in formation. The whole sky was suddenly devoid of aircraft and you were fighting it out with one particular machine. If you managed to hit him or he managed to hit you, you then broke off the engagement. The struggle for the skies over Israel was rough and tumble. There were no heroics — you were just doing a job.

The toughest air fighting took place during the fall campaign against the Egyptians from October to January. The 101st and the 69th squadrons (the majority of men in both squadrons were Americans) accounted for all the Arab planes shot down. When the Egyptians did not come up to the bombers and fighters of Machal, pilots went down to strafe their airfields. When the weather was too bad for the bombers, the P-51s and Spitfires went on low-level attacks, called Operation Ten Plagues and Operation Horev. They destroyed enemy airplanes, railroads, marshaling yards and truck convoys.

The Machal bomber and fighter pilots seemed to be everywhere. In the many fighter and bomber sorties flown there was only one Israeli plane shot down, but the 101st and 69th squadrons shot down 40 Arab planes. Not a bad ratio considering the odds.

body dangling outside, the rest of him held only by the jagged, yielding teeth of plastic.

Inch by inch, Nat was slipping out as we traveled close to 200 miles an hour 5,000 feet above the Atlantic. His face was gray, eyes rolling and dilated above the screaming whistle of the wind coming through the broken window.

His voice cracked with fear: "God! Don't let me die! Please don't let me die!"

I looked around, grabbing Nat at the same time, trying to hold him around the shoulders until help came . . .

If I could only reach down to his belt and hold him up by that, or find something to tie around his shoulders and keep him in place. But if I let go he'd be sucked right through. I plunged my hand down farther trying to get a firmer grip on Nat's jacket.

I felt something give, a rip and tear, and almost foolishly, I looked at my arm. The Plexiglass had slashed it from elbow to shoulder, and blood squirted into my face. I wondered if I had severed an artery. There was no time to think, no time to do anything but hang on. I started screaming, but the inrushing wind tore the sound away as it left my lungs. I could see Nat's mouth open, too, but I could hear nothing.

My arm was getting numb. And cold. Blood was sticky between my fingers. I felt Nat's body slide another half inch. Somebody had better show up soon, I thought, or both of us will be out in space. I could feel the edged teeth cutting deeper and deeper into my arm, biting hard now.

Nat slid farther.

The wind was hideous: triumphant, evil, screaming in anger and exultation. I began to pray.

Just why Norman Novak came forward at this moment and stuck his head down into the compartment, neither Nat nor I ever found out. But there he was, his little monkey face staring at us with disbelief, then disappearing.

"It's okay, Nat!" I was shouting. "Norman's seen us. He'll get help. Easy, boy, easy. Don't worry, I'll hang on to you until the others get here. You'll be okay . . ."

I closed my eyes. Norman and Jerry Newman (the flight engineer) burst through the opening, each grabbing Nat around his shoulders, hanging on and starting the long pull backwards. Conway, at the controls, cut back the power so there would be less drag on Nat. Within seconds we had him safe on the floor.

Our plane had dropped out of formation, well behind the others. And Nat was out of it, not to mention me. Later I heard Conway say, "Let's get your arm fixed, Bill."

When we finally made it to Santa Maria in the Azores, it was night, and the damn place was socked in. We could have landed at Lagen, but it was a British base and they would have confiscated our plane and shipped us home.

I didn't care. At that point, I was praying, "Dear Lord, get me out of this, and I'll be a good boy and go back to Chicago and never

stick my nose in anyone else's business again."

Somehow, on the third pass, we got into Santa Maria. As we looked around, I heard some mechanics say that an Air France ship, which had been above us, had crashed into the hills. Funny, I thought, we made it, they didn't. Was it supposed to be that way? Not much time to wonder about it, though — the next day we took off again.

The flight across Europe was relatively uneventful. Although our flight-plan destination was Corsica, we all knew it would be Israel after a stop in Czechoslovakia. Over Germany a couple of U.S. fighters looked us over, stayed with us a little while and then dipped away. The old U.S. Army Air Force markings on the planes probably saved us; the fighters thought we were from some bomber group in Europe.

As the three Forts flew on, my mind drifted back . . .

At the close of WWII, I'd been with the 4th Fighter Group in the Eighth Air Force, under the command of Don Blakeslee, one of the best leaders in the fight over Germany. After the war I tried to settle down and started as a journalism student at Loyola University.

Late in the spring of 1948, I received a letter. Its message: "Please help us in Palestine." The next day I dropped into a well-known haberdashery shop on Michigan Avenue and soon I was talking to some of Chicago's more prominent Jewish citizens. They told me that they were assisting the Jewish underground army, the Haganah. Israel didn't need foot soldiers, but rather military specialists like trained pilots. I signed up on the spot.

The Haganah recruiters gave me a plane ticket and money to start me on my way. I'd gone from Mexico City to Rome to Havana to Miami Beach to pick up my B-17. Now I was headed for a former German airbase at Zadek, Czechoslovakia, near Prague.

A deal in Mexico City that would have had us flying B-25s to the Promised Land fell through when reporters found out about it. Not wanting to get involved in a scandal that would link them with American "mercenaries," Mexico sent us packing.

Then I was told that we were heading for Italy for another deal that involved fighter planes. The Israelis had solved part of their fighter plane problems with the purchase of 14 Messerschmitt BF-109s from the Skoda works in Prague, Czechoslovakia. The planes were then loaded onto C-46s and flown direct to Tel Aviv in an airlift known to the Israelis as Operation Balak.

They were soon flying off the runway of the former British air base at Ekron on the plains of Judea, less than 10 miles from Latrun, and were ready for combat against the Arab Legion in the Jerusalem Corridor a week after the invasion. The Egyptians — first, last and always the major enemy — had three squadrons of fighter planes.

Before the fighters arrived in Israel, the Egyptian bombers (converted DC-3s) were



having a field day bombing unarmed cities. The first week of June was the turning point. Modi Alon, one of the few Israeli pilots in the 101st Squadron, shot down two Egyptian DC-3s that were bombing Tel Aviv. He was later killed in a crash.

On 4 June, four of our Messerschmitts attacked the Egyptian column that was threatening Tel Aviv at Ashdod. One of our

Palestine, 1940: A group of Jewish pilots stand for inspection. They will soon take to the air to defend the Holy Land against Italian bombers. Photo: UPI/Bettmann Archives

109s was shot down by flak, flaming as it went down, spinning slowly like a ball of paper set alight and thrown into the air. Two other Messerschmitts crash-landed back at



Ekron. Because of their large propellers and fragile landing gear, the Messerschmitts were difficult to land. They were also hazardous to fly without special training.

The pilots were having trouble with the 109s. Out of the original 14 there were only three left. The Israeli government paid the Czech government \$500,000 apiece for the German fighters. What was left of the 109s

were in scrap piles being used for spare parts. Dr. Felix, Israel's chief minister to Czechoslovakia, had been negotiating with the Czech government for the purchase of 50 Spitfires (at \$1 million apiece). Due to the publicity the Czech government was receiving in the world press for letting Israel purchase planes, the deal was negated and all airlift privileges revoked. Only seven

Spits ever got to Israel, and they had to be equipped with extra gas tanks to fly the 1,500 miles.

By now most of the planes in our airlift were on their way to Israel. A base of operations was set up in Panama, because of the prohibitive costs of certain engine conversions required by American law. A second base of operations was being set up in Rome. The pilots who flew the regular flights from Panama were all Americans; the planes they flew were flying under Panamanian registry. All had hair-raising tales to tell. They transported machine guns, ammunition, engines and vehicles. Once in Italy they picked up displaced persons for the final leg to Israel.

Once in Rome I made contact with an Israeli, Danny Agronsky, who said there were 15 P-51 fighter planes available for us. Those of us with P-51 experience were to fly them back to Israel. The aircraft had wing tanks, enabling them to carry enough fuel for the flight back to the Holy Land.

One of my old WWII buddies, Buzz Buerling, met me at the hotel. We had a few drinks and he introduced me to another flyer, Sidney Cohen. I was surprised when Buerling told me that he and Cohen were going to fly a Canadian Norseman light transport to Israel. We all needed sleep before the mission so it was off to bed.

It seemed that I had hardly put my head on the pillow before my phone rang. It was my 0300 wake-up call. Before I realized it I was dressed and having coffee with the other pilots. We piled into the waiting cars in front of the hotel and drove out to the Urbe airfield outside Rome. The ships looked sharp in the predawn shadows and it felt good to get back into a familiar cockpit, adjusting the shoulder harness, tightening the safety belt. Then a few shots of prime, the starter was pressed and the ship purred lazy power.

Buerling and Cohen were first to take off. Their Norseman had climbed about 100 feet into the air when suddenly a sheet of flame appeared on the side of the aircraft. It stalled, nosed over and rammed into the ground — a great pyre.

Buerling and Cohen didn't have a chance. We wanted to get out of our planes and haul them out, but it was no use. Danny Agronsky, the contact man, kept screaming for us to get back to the end of the runway and make a new start.

One after another we took off, smoke from Buerling's plane hitting us, drifting across the Plexiglas. I looked back when I was airborne. There was a great cone of fire, nothing else. No sound. Nothing.

The next day newspaper headlines screamed the news that Buerling, a World War II ace, had crashed while smuggling planes out of Italy for Israel. I remember that a Swiss newspaperman said that Buerling was flying to Palestine for fun and money, and quoted him as telling friends "that he was glad to get back into combat," and he would drop bombs and fire guns for

anyone who would pay him.

That's nonsense. A lot of people had the wrong idea about Buerling. He couldn't have cared less about money. He could have received a far greater salary from a number of other countries who wanted his service (the Arab states included). Buerling sought Israel out because he wanted to help her. The newspapers missed the whole point. Here were two men, a Jew and a Christian, who perished together side by side. Both died for a people they wanted to free and for an alien land they never had a chance to see.

Buerling and Cohen were dead, I thought as my mind drifted back to the present. And everyone missed them, but we were going on with the mission which was now all coming together. We had landed in Czechoslovakia and were sitting quietly in a large room at the Stalingrad Hotel in Zatec, looking at the Israeli liaison officer who stood before us.

"Men," the tall, thin officer told us, "as you know, up to now the Arabs have been sending their aircraft over our cities without meeting much in the way of anti-aircraft fire or fighter opposition because we had none or very little. But now, thanks to you boys, we've built up a pretty potent force, and we will be able to carry the war right into the laps of the Gypos.

"Each '17 will hit a different city." He paused, waiting for the stir of excitement to die down. These were our first combat orders.

"Each '17 is loaded with 12 500-pound bombs. Since there are no belly turrets, I know you will find a few blind spots on each ship. But that can't be helped. I don't know if you gunners will be happy about this, but the best we could get were .30 calibers, not .50s. Besides, it may make the Gypos think you're carrying all your guns. Now for the targets."

We were silent, waiting.

"The operation will be called *Nabut*. In ancient Hebrew that means to look at or to look upon." The liaison officer's smile was tight and grim.

"Now, I'm here as liaison and briefing officer. I will also go as second navigator on the lead ship. I have been over the target area many times, and I know it well. The Three Hammers [code name for the B-17s] will bomb strategic targets in Egypt if technically possible. Time for takeoff will be about 0700 hours. The target area is encompassed by the red line on the maps you see in front of you."

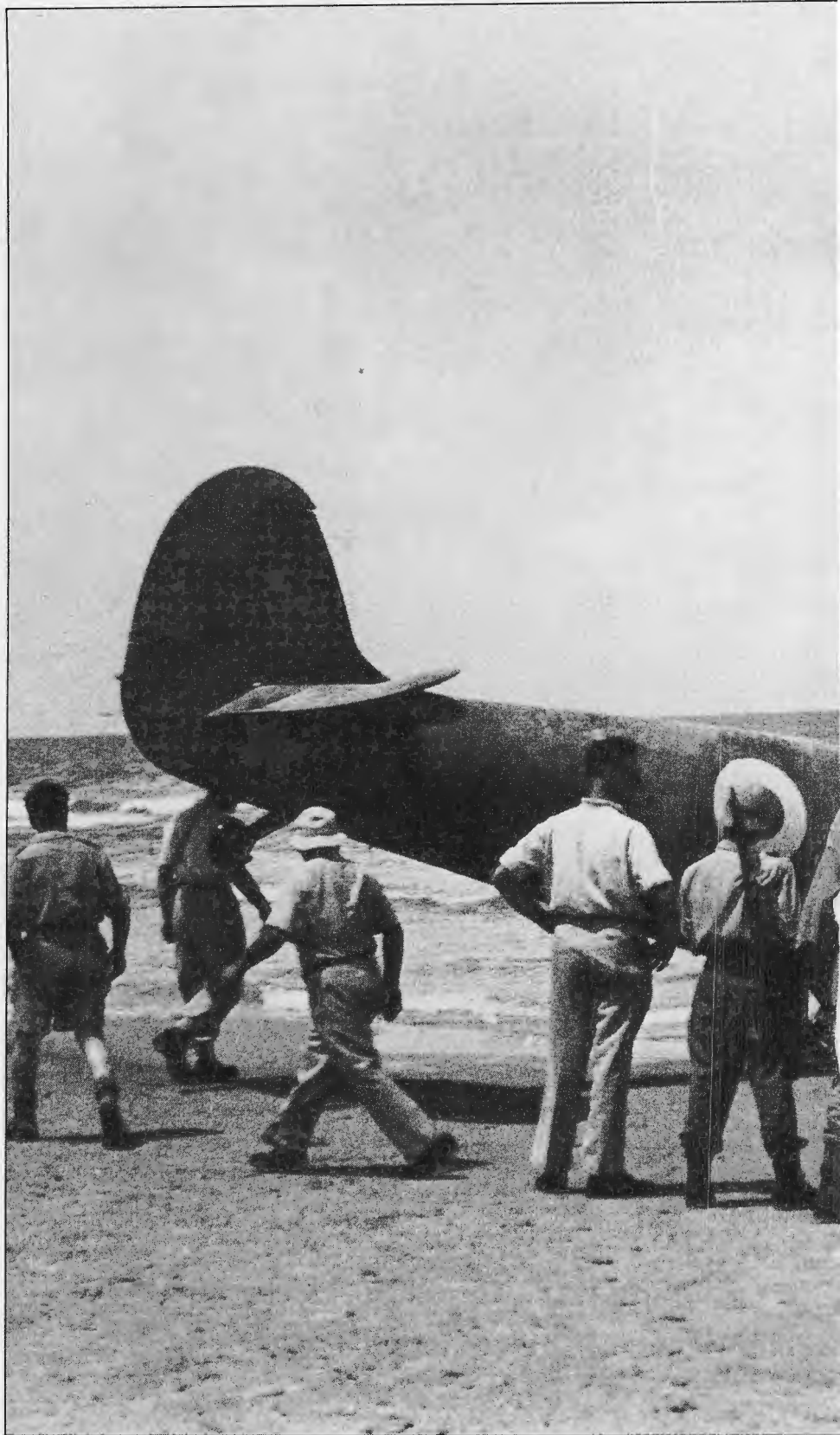
We stared at the map. We were going to bomb Cairo!

The liaison officer went on, outlining our alternate targets and navigation checkpoints.

He paused. "Now for defense."

We stirred again. Defense must mean the guns that would be shooting at us. It was still hard to realize that this calm, dry voice was speaking the language of war.

"Cairo," he went on, "probably has serviceable radar stations. Anti-aircraft un-



known, probably a number of 88s and 105s. Some Spitfires stationed at Almaza Airport to the east of town."

The briefing officer concluded by telling us that our alternative return base would be Ramat David and describing its facilities. Time over target would be 40 minutes after last light. We were instructed to fly echelon starboard formation to destroy the clarity of

An Egyptian Spitfire lies on the beach near Tel Aviv where it was shot down by Israeli defenders. Photo: UPI/Bettmann Archives

enemy radar readings.

We left the briefing room and got into a dusty bus parked near the hotel. It would take us to the airport.

I was flying with Raymond Kurtz, the



flight commander of the three B-17s. He was a veteran bomber pilot and a Jewish patrolman from Brooklyn who now found himself ferrying a British bomber from Canada to Israel. Norman Moonitz, a Jewish fireman from Brooklyn and a veteran Air Force pilot, was flying his right wing. John Mayer from Northbrook, Ill., flew on his left wing.

Over the Alps our bomb-loaded B-17s ran into snow; over the Adriatic, between Italy and Yugoslavia, we ran into some brief flak from Albanian shore batteries.

We were getting close to target now.

"Okay, Nat," Kurtz called over the intercom to the bombardier. "You'd better take over now. She's going to be all yours. We're just along for the ride."

The gunners had their parachute packs on. The armorer had already worked in the bomb bay, getting the arming pins on the bombs, hooking the pins by wires to ring clasps and bulkheads. Thus, when the bombs fell out of the bay, the pin would be pulled out by the wire, setting the fuse either to go off at contact or within a few seconds, depending on the time setting.

The two other ships had already flashed their Aldis lights through the astrodome, signaling us that they were breaking out of tight formation to go on to their own targets.

Somehow the steady drone of the engines seemed to grow louder. It always happens this way before battle, I thought. You hear more, see better, every sense is working faster and overtime. Every nerve becomes razor-sharp and cuts into you so hard that sweat breaks out all over your body. The enemy seems to be everywhere — that bright star might be the light of an enemy plane.

Our radio was set on Egyptian frequency VHF range. We could hear the Cairo tower asking us to identify ourselves. Kurtz answered at once, saying he was TWA; would they please turn on the runway lights?

"They sure feel safe down there and confident," I thought.

The city lights twinkled, the green-white flash of the rotating beacon slashing through the night. Nat's voice was crackling on the intercom, and I could hear the hum of the motor opening the bomb-bay doors. We had opened the door behind us so we could check to see if any bombs were left or hung up.

Now the air was whistling shrilly through the open door of the bomb bay. Looking behind me, I could see the bombs: fat, sleek and deadly 500-pounders, a dozen of them. Thinking of the death and agony they would soon cause, I turned my head away.

Nat had taken over, and the plane was now on a dead-level bomb run. As we came over the city, I heard the click of the bomb shackles as they opened up.

One by one, the bombs began to fall. Each bomb groaned in protest as it left its wired nest. As they began to hit their targets, I could feel the low but steady puff-puff-puff of concussion, and the ship lifting a little at each one. The bombs screamed relentlessly as they hurtled through the night sky, then splashed and spewed into flames, yellow and red, orange and blue. Wiping out lives, innocent and guilty alike.

It was over. In a few seconds it was all over. We winged for the sea as the searchlights began to stab the sky close to us, and the guns began a hasty, accurate fire. We made our 180-degree turn out to sea.

I was suddenly very tired. I looked at my watch. It was 0715. Then I realized it was 15 July — my 29th birthday.

The next morning I counted 110 holes in our B-17 from anti-aircraft fire. It was a miracle we still flew. But we had done the job and we were proud to have played a part in Israel's birth. ✕

PRINCELY PROTECTION

Brit Merc Follows the Money

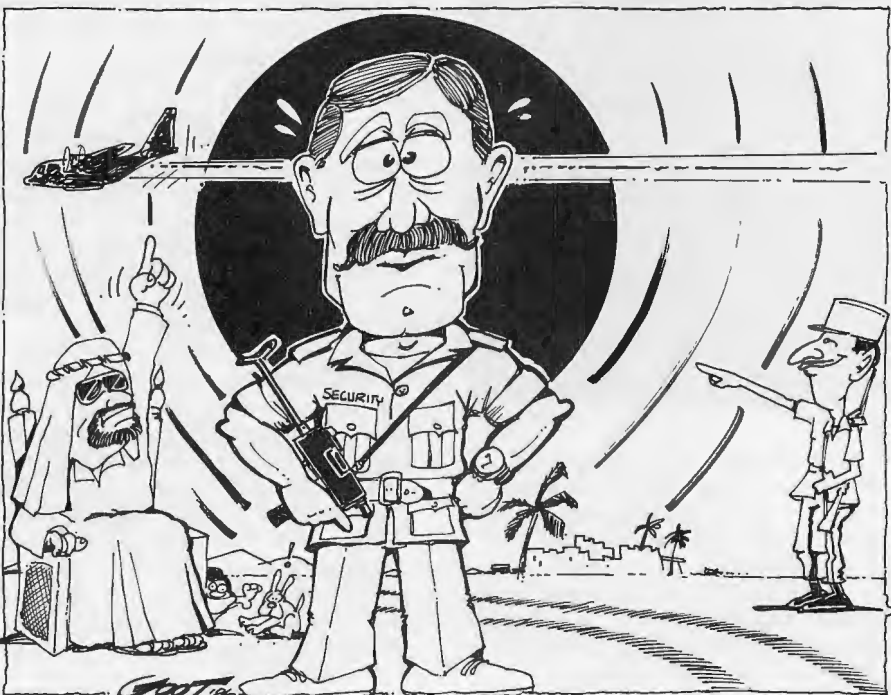
by John McDonald

I started work for a prince of Saudi Arabia in London in January of 1984. Most of my security work was arranged for me by a London agency, and the contract was of the usual sort.

I would get 300 tax-free English pounds a week, paid by the agency while I was in London, and held for me by the agency when I would work out of country. Travel and all living expenses would be provided by the prince. By way of comparison, the

MERC IN MOROCCO

John McDonald is back in London, but he has hasn't lost interest in bodyguard work. And after five years in the 2e REP of the French Foreign Legion, one year in the Rhodesian Armoured Car Regiment and 44 Para Brigade, he's well-qualified for the jobs he finds.



average English working stiff figures he's being treated well if he's making 100 pounds a week; of course he pays his own expenses.

We were well-paid. Unfortunately, we were going to earn it.

Work began in London, at the Savoy Hotel. I figured that was going to be all right, so I didn't complain. When we weren't in the fashionable Strand, work was even easier and more pleasant at the prince's private residence east of London.

The prince knew what he wanted, and was willing to pay for it. Some Arab princes keep home-grown bodyguards or Pakistanis or Sikhs. This one liked light-skinned professionals. His previous cadre had been Americans, but a French para had begun edging them out. By the time I arrived, the personal bodyguards were all French.

Jean, the chief bodyguard, was the original para among the retainers. He'd even done a tour with the Rhodesian Army, he claimed, but the few Rhodies in the corps of



privately hired English bodyguards said they'd never seen him. Still, he had photos of himself and a few mates wearing Rhodesian camouflage, and seemed a thoroughgoing professional.

We had few complaints about Jean. Unfortunately, his three subordinates were inexperienced French civilians.

The Frogs took care of all the prince's business, and amused us in their spare time. Since Jean was sole possessor of all their military training, they were fabulously disorganized. They never knew where each other were or what the others were doing.

Whenever the prince's family traveled, they hired local help to beef up security. The prince had brought his whole family to London. One entire floor of the Savoy Hotel was reserved for his relatives, their spouses, children and friends. There wasn't even room for security personnel. We were billeted in regular rooms all over the hotel. My agency had lined up 32 veterans to watch after his guests. All my comrades were

either British Paras or British SAS. The prince's family would have no trouble in London.

Easy duty is what it sounded like, but that was far from the case. First there was protocol. The Arabs wouldn't open doors for themselves, and you'd better be quick with the door handle. And no matter how late the hour or how long and boring the guard duty, you couldn't sit back with your feet up because if an Arab saw the sole of your foot that was a serious insult, and maybe your job. Then there was all the weirdness about the women . . . that's a chapter in itself.

The worst thing we saw in the hotel was the way the kids treated pets bought for their vacation. Brits always have a soft spot for animals, and the way those brats taunted, poked, prodded, kicked and trifled with one puppy made us boil. After a few days the spaniel pup spent every moment it could steal from the Arab children hiding under furniture. Soon, one kid would see a paw or a bit of tail and they'd drag it out to tease it

again. One otherwise-callous veteran of a half-dozen wars threatened to quit and report the lot to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Finally, the dog was so intimidated the children couldn't get a rise out of it anymore: It just cowered and whimpered and wouldn't move. Then they lost interest. One of the bodyguards took it in, cared for it and left it with a friend when we departed for Morocco.

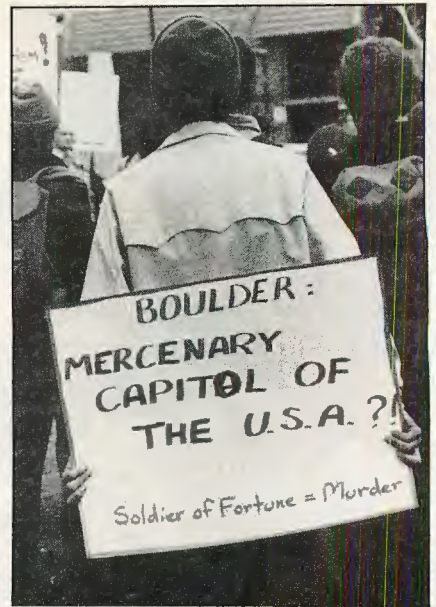
But the worst of it was the confusing competition among security forces. I've already mentioned the four Frenchmen, the permanent cadre. Then there was the 15-man force protecting the prince's immediate family contracted by the London security agency. The prince's father-in-law, an important religious leader in South Asia, had retained an additional 15 veterans, mainly Paras with some Royal Marines and SAS, and — here's where things get strange — they were hired through yet another Euro-

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PEACE FRAUDS

Ortega's Fifth Columnists Subvert Freedom

by James L. Pate



Communists apparently can't spell. Nor think for themselves. But at least they can carry signs around — just like old times. Photo: Dale Andradé

The Rev. Stuart Taylor, right, a national Witness for Peace organizer at a rally against *Soldier of Fortune*. Taylor is typical of the many wolves in priests' clothing who mislead their flocks into helping the communist cause in Central America. Photo: Dale Andradé



DEMOCRACY has its ironic price. We often take for granted free press, free speech and the right to protest against perceived wrongs. But these freedoms are valuable — even vital — to propaganda leaders in totalitarian societies like the Soviet Union, who want to exploit our system of government to their own advantage. Used by these men, free speech may not mean *true* speech. Free press isn't necessarily *honest* press in their hands. Our cherished rights provide Kremlin planners one major means of expanding their

sphere of influence through what is known in the intelligence community as "active measures."

The American public in recent years has witnessed a resurgence of such active measures not seen since the Vietnam War. Spy scandals in the past year are so numerous they are almost passé. On a lower level, increasing numbers of supposedly religious groups claiming to promote peace in Central America provide havens for "refugees." Interestingly enough, these refugees always

seem to be fleeing U.S.-backed governments or organizations, never Nicaragua's Marxist rule nor the terrorist guerrillas the Managua regime supports in El Salvador.

The timing of this resurgence in active measures is hardly coincidental. As the Reagan administration's concern has turned to action against the steadily growing Soviet-Cuban adventurism in Central America, communist propaganda countermeasures in the United States have mushroomed almost overnight.

Such 1960s groups as the Students for a Democratic Society and the Weather Underground were unarguably exposed as being not pro-peace, but violently pro-Marxist. So, 1980s organizations appropriately have chosen other names and guises to mask their true intentions: Witness for Peace (WFP), Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), the National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People (which later changed its

name to Nicaragua Network), the Ecumenical Program for Inter-American Communication and Action (EPICA), the National Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala (NNSPG) and others.

Their active measures "entail influencing the policies of . . . government, undermining confidence in its leaders and institutions [and] disrupting relations between other nations. This frequently involves attempts to deceive the target . . . and to

distort the target's perception of reality," according to *Dezinformatia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy*.

"Active measures may be conducted overtly through officially sponsored propaganda channels, diplomatic relations and cultural diplomacy," this scholarly work by Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson reveals. "Covert political techniques include the use of covert propaganda, oral and written disinformation, agents of influence . . . and

COMRADE SCHROEDER SOLICITS

The communists learned early on in Vietnam the benefits of cloaking themselves in apparent legitimacy by getting prominent American public figures to support their totalitarian cause. Jane Fonda and Tom Hayden are two of the most infamous examples from that era. Now, Marxist propagandists are trying to pull the same PR hocus-pocus in an effort to confuse U.S. citizens about who are the good guys and who are the bad guys in Central America. And they have plenty of willing help.

Leading the list of influential U.S. citizens hoping to help the advance of Marxism in the Western Hemisphere are people like actor Mike Farrell, better known as "Captain B.J. Honeycutt" on the old M*A*S*H series, and U.S. Rep. Ronald Dellums, a Los Angeles Democrat who allied himself with the Marxist regime in Grenada. But one of the most blatant supporters of the Marxist cause in Central America is U.S. Rep. Patricia Schroeder, a Denver Democrat. Despite their communist sympathies, both she and Dellums hold key positions on the House Armed Services Committee.

In a fund-raising letter dated 17 June 1985 Schroeder solicits money for the Nicaragua Network, one of the more notorious communist propaganda front organizations. She said she hopes to "redeem our country's honor by reversing the Reagan Administration's tragically misguided policy toward Central America." She talks of "appalling evidence of repeated atrocities" by U.S.-backed groups, but makes no mention of the human rights vacuum under Nicaragua's Marxist regime.

She notes that "the Nicaragua Network has been working quietly and imaginatively to educate the American public about Nicaragua." The key word here is "imaginatively," given the Marxist mouthpiece's blizzard of niggling jibberish they pass off as "facts." Schroeder touts the group as a "network of 150 local committees in 32 states" which has "established close working relationships with nearly all the other major national groups" sympathetic to the Sandinistas.



Schroeder brags in her letter that "the Nicaragua Network has channeled over \$320,000 in direct material aid to Nicaragua . . . Its goal for 1985 is to deliver another \$300,000." She admits that over 700 U.S. citizens (well over 1,000 at this writing) have been sent to help Nicaragua's Marxist regime in its confiscation of cotton and coffee crops from poor farmers. "Hundreds more are scheduled to depart later this year," she wrote.

But Schroeder and her fellow Democrats in Denver do more than write letters. A Nicaragua Network leaflet distributed in the area acknowledged that it was published with facilities provided by the local Democratic Party, specifically thanking the party office manager Bettina Basanow. But that's not all. The leaflet provided a name — Agnes Ann Schum — as a contact for anyone interested in going to Nicaragua to help the government confiscate coffee and cotton crops.

When I tracked her down, posing as an interested college student, I discovered that it was Sister Schum, a member of the Sisters of Loretto, an order closely allied with the Maryknolls which also

preaches "liberation theology." Sister Schum was *not* at the Nicaragua Network office, as I expected, but at the Denver congressional office of Pat Schroeder, where Schum is a full-time staff adviser on foreign affairs and immigration. Sister Schum also happens to be on the Nicaragua Network National Board of Directors, a job held by Communist Party of the United States Central Committee member Sandy Pollack until her death in Cuba last year.

Sister Schum told me "almost all of us in this office" work for groups such as Nicaragua Network and Witness for Peace, organizations which help raise money for Managua.

But the Internal Revenue Service is investigating the Nicaragua Network because of allegations that it falsely led contributors to believe their donations are tax-deductible. This matches the deception with which they have waged the rest of their campaign.

Fortunately for Schroeder, her dishonesty is not a crime. But it sure is a shame. And Schroeder has shamed herself, her office, the Catholic Church, the people of Colorado and freedom-loving Americans everywhere.

international front organizations" like those mentioned above.

Vietnam is a textbook example of the power of propaganda. A largely ignorant and lazy press helped cultivate seeds of misinformation planted on our streets and campuses by devout Marxists and their unwitting activists. The harvest was a bitter fruit for loyal Americans in general and military veterans in particular. Although Vietnam's legacy lingered long as unpalatable for many Americans, it provided a veritable Indochinese feast for hungry empire builders in the Soviet Union.

Now their greedy gaze has fallen on Central America. And communist planners have not forgotten their lesson from Vietnam. It is much easier — and cheaper — to destroy Uncle Sam's will to win with words, pictures and ideas in his own backyard than with deeds on faraway battlefields. Retired Marine Corps Lieutenant General Lewis W. Walt recognized this in his book, *Strange War, Strange Strategy*.

"The camera, the typewriter, the tape recorder are very effective weapons in this war — weapons too often directed not against the enemy, but against the American people. These weapons have a far greater potential for defeating us than the rockets or artillery used against our men in Vietnam. In a free society in which the right of dissent is a sacred principle, an enemy has boundless opportunity to manipulate our emotions," Walt wrote. There was no such opportunity for the news media to scrutinize North Vietnam, nor is it free to do so under Nicaragua's oppressive regime.

But in the sense of which Walt wrote, left-leaning liberals in the United States are right in comparing our involvement in Central America with that in Vietnam. The United States *is* doing in Nicaragua what it did in Vietnam: losing due to a lack of national will and congressional courage.

The occurrence of such active measures is hardly haphazard. Despite outward appearances, propaganda is never loosely organized, nor is it just idle talk.

"The word does not typically stand alone in Soviet planning," Wilbur Schramm wrote in "Soviet Concept of Psychological Warfare," a chapter that appeared in *A Psychological Warfare Casebook*. "From the very first, communists were told by their leaders that words were not enough, that words had to merge with deeds, and both into organization. . . . When we try to describe Soviet psychological operations, therefore, we talk not so much about a word weapon as an organization weapon."

Whether unwitting or willful, well-intentioned or malicious, the people who contribute to these active measures go cloaked in moral and religious arguments which try — often with success — "to manipulate our emotions," as Walt wrote. But critical scrutiny quickly strips away this deceptive philosophical veneer. Like George Orwell's totalitarian Big Brother in 1984, such active propaganda measures em-



ploy a *doublespeak* in which words and their meanings have little real correlation.

The "peace" that so many 1960s radical groups fought for — often violently — means in Vietnam simply an absence of war, not "freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions," as Webster's defines "peace." Attesting to this fact are thousands of Vietnamese refugees who, having withstood and survived generations of war, now are fleeing the "peace" in boats barely seaworthy.

Now the so-called peace groups are at it again, helped by a small army of unwitting people who despite their best intentions are dupes nevertheless. Natural targets for these groups are people of influence, such as members of Congress, and anyone who might know and disseminate to the public the truth. *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine is proud to have been targeted by groups like Witness for Peace, CISPES and the Nicaragua Network.

Among their criticisms of SOF is that we seek to influence public foreign policy through private sector activities, and that we actively support anti-communist causes with material and money. They charge that SOF violates the law because it provides training and material assistance to guerrillas fighting a government in Nicaragua officially recognized by the United States.

These leftist critics conveniently forget to mention that CISPES provides the same type of support — plus armed manpower — to Marxist terrorists in El Salvador, a government also recognized by the United States.

Like little sheep led astray, most of these people do not realize how they are being used by communist propagandists. Perhaps a better name would be the "Witless for Peace." Photo: Dale Andradé

Witness for Peace lambasts SOF for trying to influence U.S. foreign policy in Nicaragua. Yet its members constantly lobby Congress trying to do the same thing, and they send people into Nicaragua to help the Sandinista military by positioning themselves in key tactical areas. They know U.S.-backed guerrillas are reluctant to attack targets if U.S. citizens may get hurt. When dealing with the public through "news" stories and at rallies, their logic is quite selective, their ethics situational at best.

Constantly cited "statistics" lay blame on U.S. policy for battlefield atrocities allegedly committed by Nicaragua's anti-Sandinista rebels and El Salvador's government troops. No mention is ever made of Nicaragua's suspension of all civil rights, its vehement persecution of Catholics, Jews and Indians, of forced relocation camps, jailhouse torture, political oppression and ironfisted control of the news media.

One recent confirmation of widespread human rights abuses by the Sandinistas appeared surprisingly in a liberal U.S. magazine, the 20 January 1986 issue of *The New Republic*. An article titled, "The Sandinista Lobby: 'Human Rights' Groups With A Double Standard," chronicled the story of Alvaro José Baldizon Aviles, who defected from Nicaragua 1 July 1985. Bal-



dizon was not just another defector. He had served as chief of special investigations of Nicaragua's Ministry of Interior.

"Citing specific names, dates and locations, Baldizon disclosed hundreds of murders of peasants, prisoners, Indians, businessmen and opponents of the Sandinista regime, all of them carried out by Nicaraguan government soldiers and police," the article reported. Human rights groups whose statistics are most often cited by peace groups opposing U.S. involvement in Central America were invited to interview Mr. Baldizon. They failed repeatedly to keep their appointments. Mr. Baldizon said many of the DGSE (Nicaragua's state security agency) victims were buried alive after torture.

As to the exploitation of religious themes by the Sandinistas and U.S. "peace" groups, Baldizon revealed that his former boss, Interior Minister Tomás Borge, while personally ordering some of these killings, maintained two offices for doing business. When representatives of such groups as Witness for Peace are in town, Baldizon said Borge uses an office with a crucifix, a statue of Jesus Christ and the Bible. His real office, according to *The New Republic* article, has pictures of Marx, Engels and Lenin, as well as copies of *The Communist Manifesto* and *Das Kapital*. And despite his recent claims of Christianity, Borge has been on record since 1960 — when he and two others founded the Sandinista National Liberation Front in Havana with the help of Fidel Castro — as being a committed communist and atheist. Yet Borge is the man

who personally approved WFP projects in Nicaragua and provides them with armed escorts.

SOF acknowledges that atrocities have been committed and civilians needlessly killed. But neither side has a monopoly on this. Warfare is by its very nature atrocious. But anything worth having is worth fighting for, especially freedom. The late Army Colonel Arthur D. "Bull" Simons probably said it best.

"If history is any teacher," Simons said, "it teaches that when you become indifferent and lose the will to fight, some other son of a bitch who has the will to fight will take you over."

Fighting takes many forms, as do "active measures" undertaken by the enemies of freedom. Groups like Witness for Peace and CISPES are fighting not for freedom or for peace, as they claim, but for the interest of spreading Marxism in the Western Hemisphere. These groups probably are the two most prominent in the United States. A look at their history illustrates their duplicitous nature.

Witness for Peace

Witness for Peace (WFP) grew out of a delegation involving the work of four other groups: the Washington (D.C.) Area Nicaraguan Solidarity Organization (WAN-SO), the Ecumenical Program for Inter-American Communication and Action (EPICA), the (North) Carolina Interfaith Task Force on Central America and the Nicaragua Network, then known as the National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People.

EPICA and WANSO already were in existence in 1977, when organization of the Nicaragua Network began. The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) was still a guerrilla movement based in northern Costa Rica and led by, among others, Eden Pastora. Costa Rica's Public Security Minister Jonnie Echavaria Brealy, who served between 1976-80, provided much of FSLN's weapons and logistical support via airlifts directly from Cuba. Looking for more financial support, the Sandinistas sent Miguel Bolanos-Hunter and two other Nicaraguans to Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge to set up a "solidarity," or support group for the FSLN.

Bolanos later revealed that they also set up a solidarity chapter at the University of Texas in Austin and "in other parts of the South. . . . We sent all the money and other aid we collected to the [FSLN] headquarters in Costa Rica," Bolanos said. "And we received our directions and propaganda from [FSLN leaders in] Costa Rica.

"By 1978, the Sandinistas realized the value of the solidarity committees in the United States," Bolanos said. "So they placed a couple of key people from the Sandinista organization in charge of the [U.S.] solidarity network. They were under orders from the Sandinista directorate."

That directorate, Bolanos revealed, "is guided by the intelligence organs of Cuba."

Bolanos' fund-raising and support efforts were successful enough that FSLN leaders touted them later that year to the Sandinistas' sponsors in Havana. Soon thereafter the World Peace Council asked the United States Peace Council to sponsor a national organizational meeting to consolidate solidarity support efforts. Both groups were organized and supported as front groups for Soviet propaganda interests, according to the Shultz-Godson book.

A "National Conference on Nicaragua" was convened in Washington, D.C., in 1979 and sponsored by the United States Peace Council. Among prominent organizers at this conference were Bolanos and Sandy Pollack. Pollack already held a Central Committee seat in the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA). Federal Bureau of Investigation files paint a picture of CPUSA as one of the communist party chapters most loyal to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). FBI testimony also indicates that as a loyal party affiliate CPUSA receives money and direction through persons in this country with ties to the KGB, or Soviet State Security.

The result of this Washington conference was the formation of NNSNP, later renamed simply the Nicaragua Network, which would become instrumental in helping start Witness for Peace. While still holding her CPUSA Central Committee seat, Sandy Pollack was appointed to the Nicaragua Network Board of Directors. Her work came to an end in January 1985 when she

Continued on page 88

R²I²

Mercy Missions to the Bush

by Tom Reisinger



Dr. John Peters examines a young Salvadoran girl during RRII's recent MEDCAP to Mejicanos. Since RRII is nonpolitical, its projects have helped build a better rapport between civilians and the military in El Salvador.

Since 1982, Refugee Relief International Inc. has dispatched teams of unpaid volunteers into contested areas of Central America with more than 20 tons of medical supplies collected and distributed either individually or along with other relief groups. Our numerous forays have ranged from Morazán province in northern El Salvador to the volatile no man's land on the Honduran/Nicaraguan border.

These journeys are a one-on-one operation: We don't simply dump supplies in some refugee camp, take a few PR photos and then fly back to the comfort of city life. We believe in individual attention, not statistics.

Medical Advisory Board Director Dr. John Peters and myself returned to El Salvador where we were invited by the 1st Brigade to assist in two MEDCAPS which treated over 1,400 people.



Salvadoran army medical personnel assist in the distribution of pharmaceuticals to villagers at Tonacatepeque.

CAREENING at high speed toward the battle-scarred town of Tonacatepeque, both Doc Peters and I felt a sense of *déjà vu*. We'd both been here before — maybe not to this town, but to a dozen clones from Peru to Honduras. This one just happened to be in El Salvador.

We'd been invited by the 1st Brigade to participate in a MEDCAP (Medical Civic Action Program). They'd lay on the security, all we had to do was show up — not an easy task on three hours' sleep. As the adobe houses and green fields sped by, I tried to catch a few winks before the day-long business of assisting Doc in treating ailing civilians.

The outskirts of the village came into view and along with them the unmistakable signs of a contested area — bullet-pocked walls, wary pedestrians and cautious onlookers peering from windows.

The female members of the brigade's Civil Affairs Unit loudly proclaimed our arrival, shouting through a hurriedly constructed amplifier system. No, a guerrilla attack was not anticipated, but some of the desperately needed medical aid had arrived bringing with it two strangers from *los Esta-*

dos Unidos. Clearly seeing that these medicos from the USA looked friendly and peaceful, the village square resumed its normal Saturday morning routine.

We set up shop in a local government office and were greeted by the mayor who enthusiastically voiced his pleasure over our arrival. The medical personnel established additional patient screening and treatment locations along with a makeshift pharmacy from which to dispense the prescription items.

Several hundred of the townspeople, some sick and some curious, had stationed themselves outside awaiting the word to come in. Meanwhile, troops had cordoned off the main section of the town and had positioned security patrols in various strategic locales.

As the patients trickled — then flooded — into the clinic, Doc and our interpreter screened them and then prescribed a form of treatment for the various maladies ranging from the usual scabies to more serious cases of tuberculosis, cancer and heart disease. The frustration of wanting to do more plagued John Peters, but that comes with the

territory.

As the afternoon progressed the crowd got larger. People flocked from outlying areas hoping for a quick medical evaluation or treatment for some minor injury or ailment.

All too rapidly, dusk approached and the unfortunate latecomers still pressing against the door were told that no more help would be rendered that day. Stringent security regulations required us to close down and head back to San Salvador by 1630 hrs. Traveling the highways at night is asking for trouble and there was nothing to gain with senseless bravado.

Sadly, our MEDCAP focused on only a small part of the big picture in Central America. El Salvador's own dedicated medical personnel are hampered in their program to help the people in the countryside by lack of time, lack of adequate materials and, not the least of their problems, guerrilla attacks.

RRII has attempted to fill the void. While we wish we could do more to help the people of Central America, RRII's aid is little more than a drop in the bucket. Total expenditures since our 1982 inception are less than \$100,000; not much considering the magnitude of the job we've set out to do. But there's a tremendous satisfaction in working alongside men and women who have put their lives on the line to help save a soldier's life or deliver a child from the misery of malaria. Rewards like these make our concerns about funding and operational problems pale into insignificance.

If you care to be a part of RRII in its work or to contribute medical supplies or financial help, contact Refugee Relief International Inc., c/o SOF, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. ✕

KTM'S TWO-WHEELED WARRIOR

Continued from page 49

applications are being studied as well.

Scouts, couriers and regular combat troops can use the KTM 250cc FRV to quickly traverse restrictive ground in jungles, deserts and even urban environments. They are designed for consistent performance at low or high speed, whether reconning woods and jungles or blasting across deserts and open roads at over 75 mph to set up communications links. The air-cooled two-stroke engine is light and easy to maintain. Its double-muffler system provides relatively quiet use and at 35-40 mpg, the 20.7-liter gas tank provides a 200-mile range. A five-speed shift is standard, but the optional automatic clutch is probably preferable for military use, giving a free hand for shooting or map reading and also to cut down on rider fatigue.

Metzler tires are standard issue. They provide the traction necessary for most conditions. Optional Swedish Trebelborg spiked tires allow for deeper penetration of tougher terrain and ski outriggers are available for especially demanding situations involving snow or deep mud. KTM FRVs are also equipped to be street-legal, with a quartz headlight and turn signals included. Blackout lights are included for tactical necessity.

Instrumental in introducing the KTM FRV to the United States is Al Zitta, who won a silver medal at the International Six Days, the Olympics of motorcycling. As owner of Cycle Dynamics (Dept. SOF, 74 Garden Street, Feeding Hills, MA 01030, phone [413] 786-0141), Al sells and rides KTM exclusively. At 41, he is still smokin' those young puppies on the New England enduro circuit.

A promotional program really started to jell when Zitta met Tom Campbell. Tom is a shooting sports specialist and technical representative for Smith & Wesson. He also is a world class pistol shooter who loves cross-country motorcycling. Campbell visited Cycle Dynamics looking for a reliable off-road bike. There he met Zitta, who also happens to love sport shooting. Out of those similarities a friendship naturally bloomed.

Tom, who lives in the mountains of western Massachusetts, can attest to the reliability of KTM products. When the cold winds start to blow, the roads are icing, and not even a four-wheel drive vehicle dares test the pavement, Tom jumps on his KTM 420 equipped with studded tires and makes it to



INCOMING



● **HOT DROP INTO NORTH KOREA** — Members of the 187th Regimental Combat Team were a bunch of cherries: They had never done a combat jump. In fact, they had been prematurely yanked out of jump school. Join combat correspondent Howard Sochurek on the DZ, 35 miles north of Pyongyang and 100 miles south of the Manchurian border. Photo: Howard Sochurek

● **OPFOR IN THE MOJAVE** — Soviet and American forces fight it out in the Mojave Desert battlefield, Fort Irwin, California. Join SOF's Warren Jorgenson in the world's most realistic battle-training facility. Ride out against American troops as a member of the opposition forces fighting according to the Soviet plan. The only thing missing is the blood.

● **SOVIET RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE** — Is Libya a staging area for a planned Soviet Middle Eastern intervention force? There's already a large Cuban and East German presence, and massive quantities of Soviet tanks and warplanes are already in place. We doubt they are meant for the Libyans.

● **TAKING ESPABEL** — FDN confronts the Sandinista army in a small village along the Managua-Rama highway. They are prepared to fight, but demoralized Sandinista troops empty their magazines into the air and escape. An easy victory for the FDN.

● **HOT REDLEG LZ** — Bien Hoa, May 1965. Battery B conducts the first U.S. heliborne artillery assault in combat. Major George Nyfeler recollects the exploits of Battery B from their dry, dug-in gun pits, quite a change from the muddy rice paddies they were used to.

● **GUATEMALAN GUERRILLAS** — Patrol the steaming jungles with Steve Salisbury and the Guatemalan army, hunting for Gs. With their fine-honed counterinsurgency skills, the military has successfully reduced the communist insurrection from a threat in the early '80s to a mere nuisance today.

● **SOF DELIVERS WHAT THE OTHERS DON'T** — With a subscription to *Soldier of Fortune Magazine* you get the scoop on world events, unit reporting and weapons T&E, on time every month. Don't delay. ✕

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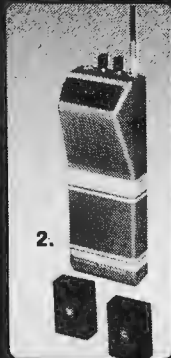
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work at Smith & Wesson some 40 miles away.

Together, Al and Tom have combined their interests and talents to demonstrate the awesome potential of assault weapons and motorcycles. These exciting shows include military and police option scenarios, including dual assault demonstrations on the KTM FRV. ✕

FULL AUTO

Continued from page 19

with combination padlocks. The Deluxe SAF-T-CASE carries two Thompson submachine guns, with room for drums, magazines and other accessories, and has the added features of snap-on wheels and 2-inch nylon belts to allow you to load your other luggage and pull everything along behind you. The very best always costs more and the Deluxe model (50 x 13¾ x 4 inches) will set you back \$269.95. But it sure beats a violin case.

Grendelite Combat Flashlight

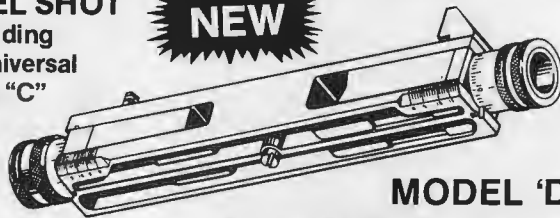
During my last foray into the bush of El Salvador I tested what has to be the most powerful fistful of light I've ever attached to my combat harness. Primarily intended for those who need a compact long-range light source for intermittent use, the Grendelite A-2 Combat Flashlight is only 2 inches in diameter and 3.5 inches long. A low light mode preserves night vision and is especially useful for map reading. This pocket searchlight owes its compact size to a battery cluster partly enclosing the optics and switch assemblies.

The case is made from a tubular section of cold-drawn noncorrosive aircraft aluminum alloy. The switch housing is CNC turned and milled from solid stock and pneumatically swaged to the rear of the case to form a hermetically sealed connection. The lens is injection molded in high impact polycarbonate. The ABS reflector is metal coated, parabolic and focused to a blinding, concentrated beam. Powered by eight AA-size batteries and a Krypton high-intensity bulb, the Grendelite is completely shock- and waterproof and weighs 11 ounces, fully loaded. Also included is a lifetime warranty and an integral beltclip. Available in black or electroless nickel finishes, the black anodized model with spare bulb and 8 Alkaline batteries carries a list price of \$41.45 and can be ordered directly from Grendel Inc. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 908, Rockledge, FL 32955). Billed as the world's most powerful pocket searchlight, I'm mighty impressed with this little light-saber. ✕

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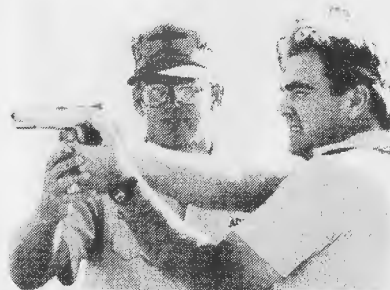
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PANA JUNGLA

Continued from page 67

next best thing to being skinny before we started, and he lost another 25 pounds during the four weeks of Pana Jungla. Another Yank from the 193rd Infantry Brigade (Panama) thought it was just too much effort to find food in the jungle, so he perched himself next to a mango tree for the last three weeks. Fortunately for him it was near a stream so he was able to get plenty of water to purify and drink. And that's about all that saved him from succumbing to dehydration from the massive bout of diarrhea resulting from the exclusively mango diet.

At the end of the survival phase, about two days before graduation, we started escaping-and-evading our way the 25 miles back to the main camp. No map, no compass. Avoid all contact with anybody.

Once you complete the escape and evasion exercise and end up safe back in camp, they throw that damned PT test at you again. After three weeks of just trying to survive in the jungle it's none too bloody easy.

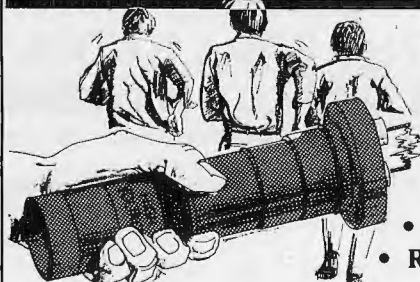
Then, and not a moment too soon, came graduation. The head honcho of Pana Jungla handed us our certificates and Pana Jungla patch — to be worn above the right shirt pocket — and then shook our hands. We were finished.

Civilization immediately reasserted itself. We took off for the nearest U.S. military installation and hours of eating, sleeping and showering with total abandon. It was nice to be somewhere where dinner didn't try to slither off the table, where going to bed *really* meant that, and where water came from a faucet instead of a vine.

I've since heard that *Escuela Pana Jungla* has moved to an area called Bocas del Toro up on the northwestern coast of Panama close to the Costa Rican border. It's completely isolated and in absolutely virgin jungle. There are no roads at all, and the only way in is by foot or chopper. I've also heard the course is being extended from four to six weeks: Classroom work has been extended to two weeks with the remaining four programmed for the survival phase. If that's the case, I'll be happy to read about it in another issue of SOF. ✕

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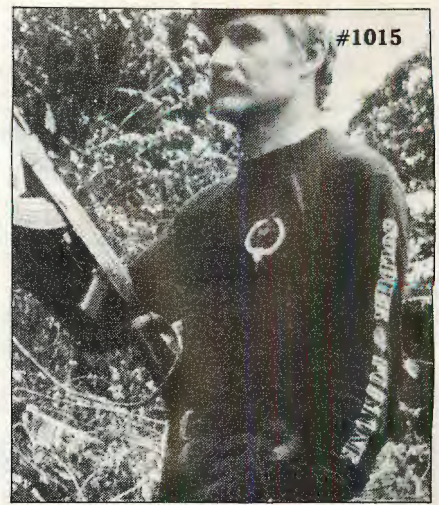
Continued from page 35

dovetail slot on the slide. (Remember, when adjustments are made to a front sight you must move it in the opposite direction you want the bullet to strike.) Rounded in front, the front sight has a vertical white bar painted on its back side. You are supposed to align this with orange bars on either side of the square-notch rear sight.

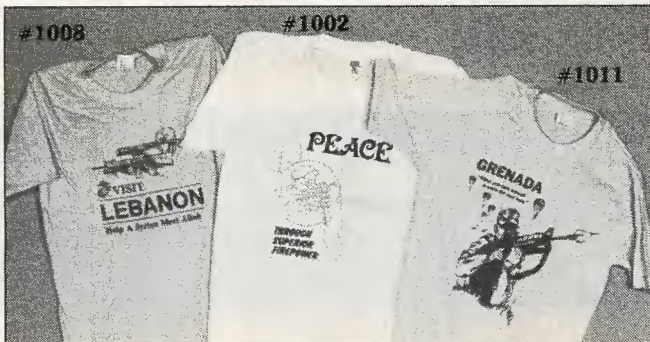
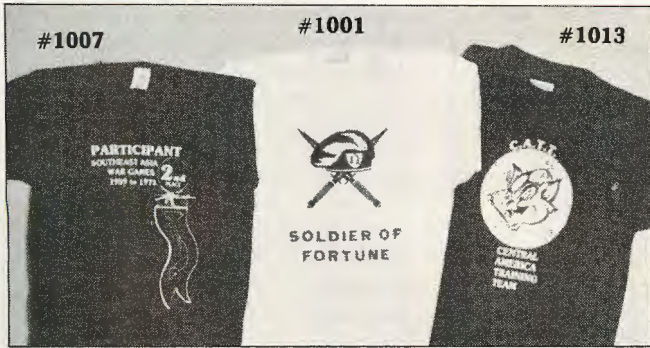
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quisition with a "flash" front sight picture at normal pistol engagement ranges. If you do so, blobs of any color will seem to disappear. They are neither distracting nor useful. Colored dots and bars are useful in combat only if they are luminescent and you have been attacked at late dusk, early dawn or at night. Except for the rear surfaces of both the front and rear sights, the P9S is remarkably free of sharp edges.

Maintaining the P9S' other components is no more difficult than tending to the barrel. Disassemble by first engaging the safety, removing the magazine and retracting the slide momentarily to make certain no cartridge remains in the chamber. With the slide forward, push up on that portion of the barrel catch that protrudes down through the front of the trigger guard. At the same time move the slide assembly forward as far as possible and lift it off the receiver group. Push the barrel forward against the recoil spring and lift it and the spring out of the slide. Separate the recoil spring and barrel. Use one leg of the barrel extension as a tool and insert it between the bolt head and slide, pressing against the spring-loaded locking catch on the bolt body until the bolt head jumps forward and can be withdrawn. No further disassembly is normally required. The grip can be withdrawn from the receiver by removing the two screws on the backstrap. I do not recommend this as a normal procedure since parts from the trigger

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mechanism may fall out and you might end up sending everything back to Heckler & Koch in a brown paper bag.

After cleaning, reassemble in the reverse order. Serial numbers on the barrel, slide and receiver should match; otherwise, you bought someone else's problems. Make certain both locking rollers are in place, as a pure blowback pistol in .45 ACP would be an unpleasant surprise. Insert the bolt head with the extractor toward the ejection port. Press down on the locking lever again with the barrel extension and push the bolt head rearward until it engages. Place the slide over the receiver so that the guide lugs can ride in the rails. Press down, pull back and let the slide fly forward.

Next, you need to slide your P9S into some proper leather. No one makes better rigs for the P9S than Milt Sparks (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 187, Idaho City, ID 83631). Uncle Milt, as his family up at Jeff Cooper's Gunsite call him, has been making holsters for professionals for a long time. No plastic or nylon here, and not many models to choose from, but they all work. Milt's all-leather designs are simple and clean-looking — nothing that would appeal to a drugstore cowboy.

My preference for the P9S, and others, is the #55BN crossdraw holster. Originally designed by Bruce Nelson, Milt can give you a slight muzzle forward rake and that's the way I like it. Strong-side rigs are fine for gong shooters, but in real life you don't want to telegraph your moves to those potential opponents to your rear or on the periphery. I fit this holster to a 1¾-inch #1B Sparks belt. Belts are every bit as important to concealment rigs as is the holster. The belt should be as wide as possible. It should fit the holster tightly and should be stiff. I use a lined belt constructed of two pieces of 6/7-ounce #1 grade top-grain cowhide. Milt puts a substantial solid brass buckle on his heavy-duty belts, attached with brass Chicago screws to facilitate buckle changing.

So equipped, it was off to the range. More than 500 rounds of four distinctly different types of ammunition were fired through the P9S on several occasions. G.I. ball was used for control (headstamp: WCC 67). More than 300 rounds fired during the tests were reloads assembled on my Dillon RL-1000 progressive reloader. They consisted of medium-hardcast 230-gr. roundnose bullets, assorted cases, CCI Large Pistol primers and 6.3 grains of Unique. Although I have fired this cartridge without problems in all types of Colt M1911 pistols and Thompson submachine guns, the P9S did not care for this morsel. There were three failures to eject and one feed ramp failure.

A box each of two specialty rounds were fired for function. I have an affinity for Winchester Silvertip Hollowpoints, having used them successfully in calibers .380 ACP, 9mm Parabellum and .44 Special. The .45 ACP 185-gr. Silvertip sailed

through the P9S without a murmur of discontent.

Hydra-Shok bullets (Hydra-Shok Corp., Dept. SOF, RD 2, Watkins Glen, NY 14891) were first developed in 1970, but were not introduced until 1977 in a 146-gr. .38 Special chambering called the Scorpion. They deserve wider recognition and distribution than they have achieved. This hollowpoint lead projectile (with three percent antimony) is characterized by an unusual tapered center post which is integral with the bullet core. Moving at only moderate velocities, the Hydra-Shok bullet exhibits amazing expansion in most fluid mediums, including the human body. At low impact speeds (ranging from 650-850 fps) the Hydra-Shok projectile creates a short and very wide wound channel which is far out of proportion to its momentum level.

Several years ago, Hydra-Shok introduced a .45 ACP loading. Its effects downrange have already been proven. But with its truncated cone cross-section, would it function reliably through a semi-automatic pistol? Although the slide must be released smartly to chamber the first round, once loaded the P9S devoured all fifty Hydra-Shok cartridges without a twitch. A box of 50 must always be the minimum test of reliability for any specialty ammunition you intend to carry for serious social purposes.

Regardless of the ammunition, the P9S will consistently dump an entire magazine of seven into a tight 1.5- to 2-inch group at 25 feet when fired offhand from the modified Weaver stance. Such astounding accuracy is directly attributable to the stationary barrel and its polygonal rifling. Once you learn how to use its control panel without conscious effort, the P9S possesses excellent handling characteristics. Another up-side feature is the minimum felt recoil, far less than the Colt M1911 series. But there's always a down side to everything. No matter what the loading, the P9S exhibits excessive muzzle whip that increases recovery time for repeat shots.

Overall performance of this quality has its price. Combat versions of the P9S will cost you \$666 in 9mm and \$732 for .45 ACP. The Target Model with adjustable sights, trigger and trigger stop goes for \$799 in 9mm and \$866 in .45 ACP. If you're ready to shoot your entire wad on a P9S, they have the Sports/Competition Model in 9mm only that will set you back \$1,333. While it has the same frame as the Target Model (adjustable trigger and trigger stop), it comes with two grips: the standard plastic and wraparound target grips of European hardwood (small, medium or large) and stippled thumbrest; two slides: the standard combat slide with fixed sights and a target slide with adjustable rear sight and front sight mounted to a barrel weight; and two barrels: the standard 4-inch and a 5½-inch target barrel.

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action-only version and a selective-fire machine pistol with a low rate of fire, 20-rd. magazine, graduated rear sight and detachable shoulder stock. A .22LR conversion kit was contemplated, but never offered in the United States. Each P9S sold in the United States comes with two magazines, but spares are available for \$28 each. An 8-inch target barrel, which may require minor fitting, can be purchased in either caliber for \$174.

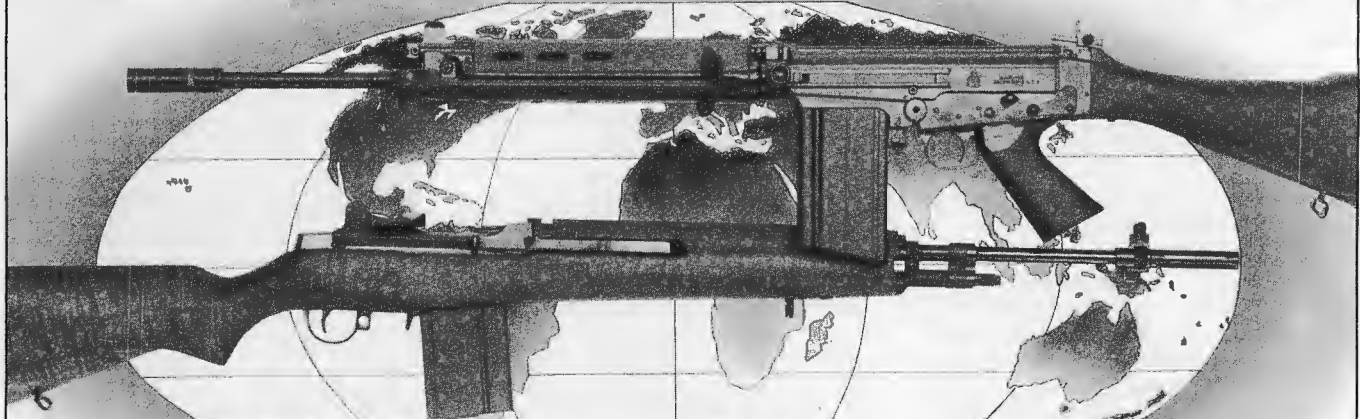
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PEACE FRAUDS

Continued from page 79

was killed in a plane crash in Cuba. The Nicaragua Network was launched about the time the FSLN finally succeeded in overthrowing Somoza's oppressive right-wing dictatorship. Cuba's assistance expanded, and was joined by direct manpower

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er, weapons and equipment from the Soviet Union and later from Libya. Nicaragua quickly gave official diplomatic recognition to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and under the communist Sandinistas became the biggest PLO supporter outside the Arab world. So it should have come as no surprise when PLO trainers also began arriving in Managua.

And under these powerful outside influences, the ruling Sandinistas slowly but surely betrayed the broad-based coalition of Nicaraguans that had given their communist cause a veneer of legitimacy: the Catholic Church, farmers, factory workers and labor unions. Like Hitler, President Daniel Ortega's regime began persecuting Jews and other ethnic minorities such as Creole blacks and Miskito Indians. And like most other Marxist-backed "people's revolutions," things in Nicaragua quickly went from bad under Somoza to even worse under the Sandinistas.

With the Sandinistas in power, Bolanos was recalled to Nicaragua. As a reward for his solidarity work in the United States, Bolanos was made an upper level agent for the Sandinista Directorate for State Security (DGSE), headed by a party loyalist appropriately named Lenin Cerna. Cerna's boss is Mr. Borge.

From his position near the top of DGSE, Bolanos' disillusionment grew proportionately with human rights abuses and political and religious persecution in Nicaragua. His anxiety only increased with the birth of his first child, a son born in 1982. A few months later he escaped to Costa Rica, where he worked to bring his family to safety. He provided much of the above information to the Institute on Religion and Democracy when they reached the United States. Ironically, the freedom he had exploited on behalf of Marxism became his only safe refuge from the government he had helped create.

After the 1979 conference that established the Nicaragua Network, the new organization moved into its temporary Washington headquarters, sharing space offered by the Ecumenical Program for Inter-American Communication and Action (EPICA). EPICA is located at 1470 Irving St. NW in a Washington building that also serves as headquarters for the People's Anti-War Mobilization, which is a front organization for the Communist Workers' World Party (CWWP), according to the FBI. Like the neo-Nazi group, The Order, the CWWP advocates violence as a tool to achieve social change.

EPICA further assisted the Nicaragua Network by creating a task force. Two of the four EPICA members on this task force were Yvonne Dilling and Philip Wheaton. Originally an EPICA member, Dilling later worked for the Nicaragua Network and now serves as Witness for Peace (WFP) national coordinator. Wheaton is a radical protestant minister actively involved in several leftist causes. He is a regular contributor to *Counter-Spy Magazine*, which was started in tan-

dem with the *Covert Action Information Bulletin* by CIA renegade agent and self-avowed communist Philip Agee.

One publication released by the EPICA task force introducing the group said the purpose of the Nicaragua Network is to "educate" U.S. citizens about "the true nature" of the FSLN's struggle in Nicaragua and to "underscore the imperialist role of special U.S. interests." No mention was made of the thousands of Soviets, Cubans, Libyans and Palestinians that flooded into Nicaragua after the Sandinista takeover and what, if any, role they might play.

It wasn't long before the Nicaragua Network was able to move into its own national headquarters in Washington, D.C., where it works closely with the Nicaraguan Embassy. When an SOF editor called that embassy to ask for help in making travel plans to Nicaragua, the embassy spokesman referred him to the Nicaragua Network. The magazine later learned that Nicaragua Network is the main organization for putting together tours — such as those sponsored by Witness for Peace — to Nicaragua through the official Sandinista travel agency aboard the official Sandinista airline, Aerónica.

The Sandinistas also enjoy high-level support within the U.S. government. A 17 June 1985 letter from U.S. Rep. Patricia Schroeder solicited financial support for the Nicaragua Network and reported that the group had raised and sent the Sandinistas \$320,000 by mid-1985 (see "Comrade Schroeder Solicits," p. 77). The letter stated that more would follow — Schroeder and the Nicaragua Network hoped to provide the Sandinistas with another \$300,000 by the end of the year. Working with Witness for Peace, the Network also had sent over 700 U.S. citizens to provide free labor for the Sandinistas and "hundreds more are scheduled to depart later this year."

EPICA has continued to provide the Nicaragua Network support and provide it a thin coat of legitimacy necessary for acceptance by the mainstream American public. The time seemed right, so Wheaton and Dilling co-authored a book.

"We dedicate this primer, *Nicaragua: A People's Revolution*, to . . . a veritable international liberation brigade. Through their example, we in the United States . . . were moved to a new level of anti-imperialist awareness, international solidarity and personal sacrifice," Dilling and Wheaton wrote. They went on to thank members of the Nicaraguan Embassy in Washington, other "comrades" and Ortega's foreign relations secretariat in Managua for help with the book. By their own admission that bureaucracy covered their expenses while traveling in Nicaragua to "research" their book. "Without such committed *compañeros*," they wrote, "this project would not have been possible."

No doubt. And if the reader has a vague feeling of communist revolutionary buzz words humming around in the brain right now, relax. It's probably just your imagination.

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With direction from Dilling, Wheaton and others at EPICA, the Nicaragua Network began seeking ways to further exploit and manipulate the news media, the open society in the United States in general and the church in particular. If religion is the opiate of the masses, as Karl Marx said, EPICA aimed to use it to enlist well-meaning people into their ranks and use highly questionable human rights "statistics" — many of them since proven to be not only incorrect but completely fabricated — to addle them into thinking they are serving some noble cause.

The idea was to first put a religious front on their work. With the help of a group like EPICA, this wasn't difficult. They enlisted plenty of left-wing Catholics, such as those from the Maryknoll Order, and began spreading "liberation theology," a bizarre form of Christianity aimed specifically at the millions of poor Latin Americans. It teaches that Jesus Christ was by definition of his beliefs a communist. Soviets use the same tactic in Afghanistan to indoctrinate children with a similar form of Islam.

Miguel D'Escoto, a highly placed member of the Maryknoll Order in Nicaragua, was named the new foreign minister by the Sandinistas. Pope John Paul II condemned liberation theology and members of the Church involved in it. He ordered D'Escoto and three other priests holding Sandinista government posts to resign or face excommunication. Shunning their priestly vestments, they showed their true stripes by



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casting their lot with the Sandinistas.

In contrast, the traditional, anti-Somoza Catholics, led by Cardinal Obando y Bravo, also strongly oppose the Sandinistas because of the increased religious persecution since the 1979 communist revolution. But with the state-controlled media in Nicaragua, few of Bravo's continuous protests are heard outside that country. So this propaganda play on religion continued to gain ground, and out of this progress grew Witness for Peace.

The Nicaragua Network and the Carolina Interfaith Task Force on Central America had already been shuttling U.S. citizens into Nicaragua as part of their propaganda effort. Gail Phares, head of the Raleigh-based group, was herding a tour of 30 North Carolinians through Jalapa in April 1983 when the idea for Witness for Peace was born, according to an article by Joyce Hollyday later published as part of a WFP tract titled "A Shield of Love."

"Two members of the U.S. Congress were also in the border area that day and it was widely believed that the *contras* (Sandinista term for anti-communist guerrillas) did not continue their attack because of the presence of North Americans," Hollyday wrote. "That fact sparked the thinking of the North Carolina group. Jefferson Boyer, an anthropologist and former Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras, articulated what was beginning to form in many of the minds and hearts of the groups' members: what about setting up a permanent vigil of North Americans on the border to serve as a 'protective shield' for the people of Nicaragua . . .?"

According to the account by Hollyday, herself a WFP member, the group returned to Managua and sought out Sergio Ramirez, head of the Sandinista Council of State. He suggested that they should discuss the proposal with Interior Minister Tomás Borge.

"We are at war," Borge exclaimed, according to Ms. Hollyday's report. "We wouldn't want you to receive the bullets meant for us. That would not be Christian of us."

Borge — for at least 26 years a devout communist — was trying to impress upon these people the depth of his Christian conscience. But judging from Hollyday's account, the little red spirit sitting on Borge's *other* shoulder regained the upper hand.

"After more discussion, Borge agreed that such a presence on the border could have a strong impact on the situation in Nicaragua," Hollyday reported. What she did *not* mention is a planning discussion by WFP leaders, who in a closed meeting attended by an informant, expressed the hope that some of their members might be killed by the anti-Sandinista rebels so they could be turned into martyrs. The reasoning was that the publicity would turn public opinion in the U.S. against the freedom fighters and end all hope of future U.S. aid.

By July 1983, a delegation of 150 volunteers from 30 states was back in Nicaragua to carry out the propaganda bidding of

Borge, whose Interior Ministry provided them with armed escorts to direct where they could and could not go, what they could and could not see. This trip was so successful that a permanent presence was established and in December Witness for Peace was officially organized to orchestrate these trips. As Hollyday noted, "dialogue has taken place with Sandinista officials. Agreements have been reached about access to and mobility in the border area for participants in the Witness for Peace."

One aim of these WFP trips to Nicaragua is to generate propaganda on alleged atrocities by anti-communist rebels. When not exaggerated, these "reports" in the WFP newsletter, *Newsbrief*, are outright fabrications. One example alleged that 1,800 freedom fighters attacked the village of Waslala on 3 April 1984, raping, torturing and murdering many civilians. Yet none of the major news media that investigated the allegations, such as the *New York Times*, could find *any* corroborating evidence. Not even *Barricada*, the official newspaper of the Sandinista army, reported the incident. Finally, an in-depth study by Dr. Alejandro Bolanos of the Missouri-based Nicaraguan Information Center concluded in a 145-page report that the "attack" was a complete fabrication invented for the consumption of gullible North Americans.

CISPES

If you still have doubts about the true intentions of Witness for Peace and the Nicaragua Network, the founding of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador is much more direct — and blatant. This is thanks in large part to detailed research and a subsequent report prepared for the Council on Inter-American Security by J. Michael Waller.

In a raid on a communist guerrilla base in El Salvador, a document was captured which had been written and signed by Farid Handal. In this document, Handal reported traveling to the United States in March and April of 1980, expressly for "the creation of the International Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador." CISPES began officially in October 1980.

Later released by the State Department, Handal's document said CISPES "was to have the express purpose of serving as a support apparatus for the Marxist guerrillas of Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front [FMLN]," according to Waller's report. Handal denied communist party affiliation, but acknowledged in the captured document that "I accepted their line and collaborated." Shafik Handal, Farid's brother, is linked as general secretary of the Communist Party of El Salvador and as a former FMLN general commander.

Waller points out that although the State Department says the Handal brothers are Salvadorans of Lebanese descent, "the Lebanese newspaper *Al Diftour* and *TIME* magazine report that they are of Palestinian parents. *TIME* also reports that Shafik Handal has ties to the Palestine Liberation Organization, and in particular to its leader,

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Yasser Arafat. Handal has been active in the purchase of arms for the Salvadoran guerrillas.' ”

Philip Wheaton, the radical minister who worked with Yvonne Dilling in setting up the Nicaragua Network and WFP, is a member of the CISPES advisory board. He has admitted meeting with Farid Handal in the United States, but denied that Handal and CISPES are linked.

Farid Handal wrote of meeting with the Cuban Mission to the United Nations at the home of Alfredo Garcia Almeida, fourth-ranking mission member. He said the Cubans encouraged Handal to meet with “progressive Congressmen for the purpose of making the rest of my work more natural. They offered to facilitate contacts in Washington. And they did that.” When he returned to Washington, Handal said he met with members of the District of Columbia Communist Party, whose members he stated “played an important role in the arrangements for the meeting with Congressman Ronal (sic) Dellums.” He added that Dellums is “Black, but very progressive.”

Now CISPES, Witness for Peace, the Nicaragua Network and similar groups have officially conspired together in “A Pledge of Resistance” aimed at a “nationwide contingency plan to block or halt U.S. intervention in Central America,” according to leaflets distributed by these and other groups. There are at least two dozen groups involved in “A Pledge of Resistance,” which gives the reader an idea of the scope of the communist-inspired propaganda network in the United States. This would involve a mobilization of members to occupy public office buildings and military installations, to disrupt our government and hinder as much as possible all activity aimed at U.S. assistance in Central America.

And that brings us back to the U.S. Bill of Rights and its exploitation by Marxists. To abridge any of our rights in the least would be to provide the enemies of freedom a major victory. So what, then, is the answer?

For all the criticisms of our government and its policies, we can point to one fact with pride. No democracy that we can recall has ever waged war against another democracy, at least not in the 20th century. That cannot be said about socialist and Marxist governments. So it seems that the best way to work for peace is to work for democracy. It's not as far-fetched an idea as critics may want us to believe, certainly not the pie-in-the-sky utopia promised by Marx and Engels. No one sees the state withering away in the Soviet Union, only a ruthless bureaucracy perpetuating itself.

But for some reason, so much of the political thought and fashion among writers and thinkers in this country is based on some vague notion that liberty has always existed in a kind of mist over the political left. There has long been the idea that there is something wonderful about socialism; if pursued correctly it will lead to liberty, peace, harmony and the betterment of mankind in a



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way that nothing going on in a modern industrial nation can.

Many believed — and many still insist — that Nicaragua's Marxist revolution held more promise for this than anything we have seen in modern times. But every experiment like this since the Russian Revolution has proven that socialism, when put into effect by experts, leads only to persecution and repression. Everywhere the experts have put socialism into effect, the result has been the gulag.

Unfortunately, given the trend of thought in our often misguided country, to point this out is to be labeled as some sort of right-wing reactionary. But to me, pointing this out is pointing out the obvious. And to ignore it is insane. ✕

PRINCELY PROTECTION

Continued from page 75

pean agency. As if that weren't bad enough, the father-in-law's divorced wife — who traveled with the rest of the circus — was watched night and day by a good dozen tough guys. They were working for yet another London-based agency which also sought to fill the idle hours of recent graduates of the British Paras.

By now, you get the picture that the London Savoy Hotel in January of 1984 must have been a very bad place to look suspicious. But command and control? Forget it!

Four separate, competitive, private security companies were occupying the same hotel, protecting roughly the same people. Since personnel shifted assignments constantly, old guards quit and new ones were hired, we never knew if an unfamiliar, tanned, quick-eyed man was an assassin or more help. Also, we worked normal days in shifts. One agency worked from 0800 to 1700, another worked from 1200 to 2400, short-timers might work three three-hour shifts spread around the clock, the Frogs came and went as they pleased, and any or all of us might be called at any time of day or night. There was no real routine, no changes of guard, no sign/countersign, and nobody knew who was supposed to be where at any given time. It was deeply unsettling that the Arabs seemed completely unconcerned by the potential problems caused by this lack of unified command.

Yet, this was what life must have been like in Mecca a hundred years ago. The Arabs were more concerned about the idea of having a staff, having their own personally loyal bodyguards, than about safety. Each important Arab built his own little tribe in the hotel, even if he had to hire the tribesmen.

"Hire" isn't really the word, though; "buy" is more to the point. I'd never felt like property before and — being the secure



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sort — it was a novel, amusing experience. The prince's family talked and teased, yelled, ate and argued like we were all potted plants. It was worse for the girls.

Six English girls were hired as housekeepers. For the entire stay, the Savoy didn't clean the Arabs' rooms. These girls did it. Things weren't so bad for them in London, though; they still had time off. But their fortunes, and ours, were due to change.

Agadir, Morocco, sounds like the place for a holiday when you're freezing in London in January and trying to find a pair of dry socks. But by the time we landed we were all having second thoughts. We got off the plane wearing our Hong Kong tailor-made to find ourselves swimming in heat waves. We all piled on buses and the buses followed long black Mercedes limousines toward the newly rebuilt city.

Agadir doesn't look much like the rest of the Muslim world. Of course, the people are all the same, but most of the buildings are new and clean. An earthquake took out most of the big structures a few years ago, and Western architects and construction firms were brought in to build the new city. Life in the town followed the way paved by new construction, and most of the men wore European sports clothes — cut a little too tight, no pockets and indecent colors — and the women wore a mixture of designer fashions and traditional clothes. There were few veils to be seen.

We got put up in two clean, modern hotels. They were neatly kept with high ceilings, fresh paint, air conditioning and blue-plastered swimming pools. They were more like Southern California Holiday Inns than any African hotel I've been in.

As nice as the hotels were, we were all still thick-blooded, beer-drinking Englishmen, and we were over-dressed for the occasion. The Arabs noticed we were looking a bit weak, so the head of the household told one of his Arab retainers to pass us some money to get new clothes. The retainer took the prince's roll and walked down the line of 32, giving each of us two crisp, new, American \$100 bills. We walked out of the hotel together and headed off to clothing shops. That is, most of us went shopping for clothing. A couple of boys ducked out on the fashion show to sample the local wares.

That night they regaled us with tales of the local hookers. Girls were friendly, inexpensive, and — unusually for Moslem cities — public and plentiful. They'd taken a couple of girls apiece to their rooms and had a fine time, or so they said. It taught me one lesson: You can forget your kit for merc work, since there's always enough guns and camouflage when you need them, but you're mad if you forget your sports clothes.

Since we had all been headed out to shop in a mob, and since most Third Worlders seem to hate being alone, most of the men in the prince's entourage went shopping with us. Since one of the sheiks fancied himself a boxer — his full-time trainer, an East Lon-



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doner named Bob, was with him constantly — he ambled over to the sports equipment section of the store while we all tried on running shoes and warm-ups. After spending an hour loudly arguing with a salesman, the store manager and his trainer about different cuts of sparring gloves he told us to go back to the hotel and he'd be along in a bit. Ten minutes later the Champion of Saudi Arabia — as we jokingly called him — appeared with the salesman who was carrying five expensive automatic shotguns and another Moroccan we hadn't seen before carrying two cases of shells. We thought he was going to ask us to kill somebody or rob a bank.

No, we were going hunting.

At dawn the next day, we dragged our asses into one limousine while yelling, gesturing Arabs wearing Trader Horn outfits piled into another Mercedes with their guns. The head Frog took our limousine and as we rode, he explained that we were seconded to the Moroccan Royal Guard for the rest of our stay. Having never been a member of a real Third World palace guard, I thought this would be fine, and looked forward to the issue of my jeweled turban and curved sword.

Maybe I'd get to guard the harem.

An hour later we roared to a stop in a cloud of dust. The head of the Royal Guard and a few of his men were already waiting. The Arabs loaded their weapons as we walked across the desert in an assault line, trying to scare up little things for them to shoot. After half an hour of no birds, the limos were radioed to pick us up. Then we drove around the sand hills at a good clip for another half-hour as we still tried to find birds. Nothing.

Finally, the CO of the Royal Guard got angry, grabbed the handset for the limo CB and called the king's palace. A few minutes later we were granted permission to hunt where we could find birds: the king's wild-fowl refuge.

The game refuge was hot, swampy and humid but at least there was shade. Seeing mud was almost comforting after the days of blistering sun and baking dry heat. We hadn't been in the refuge five minutes when the head of the Moroccan palace guard dropped his new shotgun. He laughed, picked it up, shook the mud globs off so he wouldn't get dirty and carried on. A few minutes later, we saw one of the king's otherwise protected birds. The head of the palace guard — a famous hunter in Morocco — shouldered his weapon, pulled the trigger, and blew the \$1,000 automatic up in his face. He hadn't checked the barrel after he'd dropped it in the mud.

That ruined the shooting holiday for the party, so we trudged back to the limousines.

Next day, the Arabs were all excited about going to another refuge to hunt wild boar. All the European bodyguards were nowhere to be seen. I don't know if anyone actually crawled under a bed, but I know the Arabs never found us.

They went anyway, probably concerned

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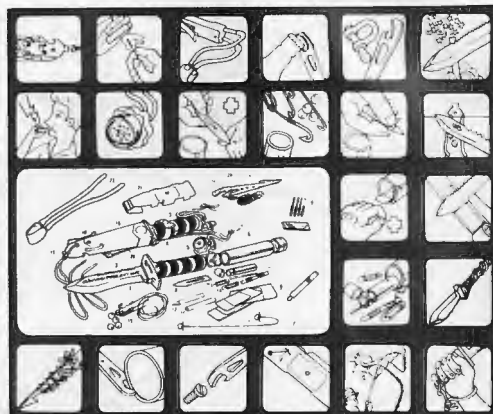
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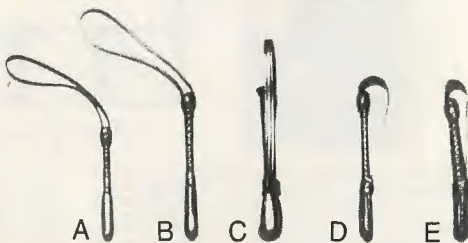
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that we were missing all the fun. When they got back, I politely inquired about their luck. I was told they actually killed a pig. I asked who shot it, and they all claimed a part. Apparently there was something like a firing squad. I hope they blindfolded the boar.

Myself, I'd rather pass out traffic tickets on Falls Road (an IRA-infested slum in Belfast) unarmed than hunt with clowns like that. At least we had some sport, even if most of it was at the expense of the Arabs.

"Chattel" means movable goods. It's the French word we get "cattle" from. In most of the Moslem world, that's the category most women fit. Hired girls get treated rather worse.

From the first days in the hotel, the English girls got a worse shake at everything than we did. Under the direct supervision of the princess there were no breaks, and they were at the beck and call of every foreigner in the place.

The Arabs didn't care about the work getting done; they just wanted somebody to order about. The girls were there to do every little thing they were told. Compared to their indentured servitude, our status as potted plants was privileged.

Bad as their life was in London, it got 10 times worse in Agadir. The girls had signed on because the agency had told them they were going to a Moroccan resort city. That's how you get the English to go places they don't belong: Tell them they'll be warm and dry, and they'll see the sun.

Sun? Our English girls hardly got outside the hotel. They were on duty over 10 hours a day — every moment the princess or the bratty kids weren't asleep. Between the nocturnal habits of upper-class Arabs, and the normal daytime activities of small children, the girls had no lives of their own.

Ten ungodly, endless days passed without a change. Then, just like the shotgun buying trip, the prince mentioned to the King of Morocco that he had his own private jet, so the king gave the prince a C-130. A little traveling music, please . . .

Early one morning we packed our kit, headed to the airport, and lounged about the limousines in the dust while relays of Moroccans and Arabs filled the C-130. Nothing was on pallets. It was just a hodge-podge of bundles, furniture, guns in cases, rugs, gift boxes, big trunks and baskets.

After a few hours, we were told to board the plane. We walked up the same rear ramp they'd used to load the cargo to find it packed like a warehouse that had been ransacked by bandits. Nothing was stacked, nothing was tied down properly, and there were no aisles or seats. Some of the bodyguards thought this was amusing and we began rearranging the inside of the airplane.

Others didn't find it funny at all. Among us were several former paras, cargomasters and jumpmasters. They knew that one air pocket or one evasive maneuver could make our corpses hard to separate from the trunks and furniture. That small knot of men grumbled quietly and glared about while the rest

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of the mob pushed piles about inside the airplane.

Finally, a spokesman from the grumblers walked up the ramp and told us they weren't going anywhere in that plane. We all stopped cavorting in the cargo bay and walked back down the ramp. None of us was going anywhere with that lot.

The Froggies were comfortably piled with the luggage, and quite happy. But when they saw we weren't getting on, they became curious. We told them we weren't flying until something got done about the load on the plane, and until we had proper seats.

The Frenchmen began howling about how well we were paid, and about how happy we should be to be working at all. They assured us this was normal; that they often flew like this. It may be good enough for them, but it wasn't good enough for us, and we weren't going to get on that plane.

We were told that that the king would be personally insulted and the prince personally embarrassed if we didn't get on the plane. After all, it was a gift from one nobleman to another.

Then we were told that we obviously had not remembered that the prince held our passports. If we did not board the plane, we would be abandoned in Morocco, without money and without passports. We could take our choice.

After some laughter and obscenities we sauntered over to the shady side of the terminal building to sit on the tarmac. For once the Arabs were as good as their word. The C-130 taxied out on the runway. We all yelled and waved goodbye as it took off.

The prince's limousines showed up about an hour later. By then we'd cooled off a bit, and were wondering what we'd do next. The prince pulled up on the runway and parked. Our spokesman dusted himself off and sauntered over to the cars. He leaned over to the open window. After a couple of minutes another car pulled up. Our spokesman got into the car. The cavalcade pulled around the tarmac square in a tight circle and stopped right in front of us. A blacked-out power window whispered down and our man's grinning face appeared.

"Get in, you lot!" yelled our spokesman.

The Moroccan in the lead car was the mayor of the city of Agadir. The prince had told him to look after us, and get us to Casablanca in the morning.

Apparently the prince had been too busy to mention that we were in trouble. The mayor took our separation from the normal travel arrangements to be a mark of favor, so we were taken back to Agadir in the mayor's limousines, and reinstated in our luxury hotel rooms.

In the morning a nice, friendly Arab bus driver picked us up in a clean, old school-bus. We piled on in high spirits. It was a beautiful day, and we toured the Atlas mountains, stopped to see the market and dine in Marrakesh, reaching Casablanca late in the afternoon.

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hotel in Casablanca. Our spokesman prepared to face the prince. After they got inside, the desk phoned the prince's quarters. The head Frog brought him up to his suite. We waited in the bus. Minutes later, we were given the bad news.

The prince was not amused. He felt he'd paid good money to have us do his bidding. He was going to give us our passports, we wouldn't be paid, and we wouldn't get airfare to the U.K.

Somebody suggested we start walking home. Nobody laughed.

Our spokesman told the prince that if he did that, we'd hold a sitdown strike in the hotel lobby after we called the British Embassy. It wasn't much of a threat, but it was the only weapon we had.

Now this sounds like a pretty weak position, but at this time, there was a lot of bad publicity about a certain relative of the prince. This man had bought a house in Beverly Hills, decorated in an unbelievably garish fashion, and then hired artists to paint the pseudo-classical statuary he'd had planted on the grounds. That wouldn't have been so bad if he hadn't had them paint the genitalia to real-life color and proportion. The world press had a field day.

Like most Third Worlders, Arabs feel very vulnerable to public embarrassment. Worse, the prince's relative had publicly violated both Islamic law and Islamic taste in his decoration of his house. The family couldn't stand much more bad ink. We had some big bargaining chips.

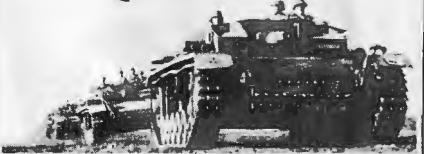
Well, we figured we were in pretty good shape, so we walked off the bus to the hotel coffee shop. Our spokesman went back up to talk turkey. Things were getting better by the minute.

Or so we thought until the police surrounded us and told us to get on the bus. We asked them why, and the chief of police told us that it was their country and we'd better do as they said. Meanwhile, the head Frog stood at his elbow, watching with a big grin on his face.

So, back we marched on the bus. And there we remained under an armed guard for seven hours. Generally, we had a good time, talking and telling jokes. Finally, about midnight, our spokesman came back. He told us we'd get our airfare back to London, and we'd be paid on arrival. All we had to do was sign the Moroccan equivalent of the official secrets act. We knew this meant nothing outside of Morocco, so we signed them and were whisked off. They took our passports, put us on a van, drove us straight to the airport, waved customs aside, and put us on the plane. A few hours later we were in London.

Now, don't misunderstand me. I am not presenting my misadventures as a "how-to" manual. Rather, this is a "how not" story. Working for Arabs is the same as working for an Englishman in the sense that they're both paying to be served. Indeed, that my mates and I failed to appreciate the differences between employers was ultimately our fault. Personal security is good

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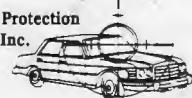


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work, but you have to know a lot more than how to hide your gun. ✕

IN REVIEW

Continued from page 12

good job. But **Charlie Mike** is more than just a look back at what it was like to fight in Vietnam. On a broader level it's a timeless portrait of life in the Army — present, past or future — where the name of the game is teamwork. They teach it to you in basic training and they try to keep you alive with it in combat, and that forms the heart of Scott's novel. His characters have grown so close through this teamwork that the loss of one of them is tantamount to losing a part of your own body, or even your soul.

Leonard B. Scott's work represents the other side of the attitude which said the war in Vietnam was a battle for individual survival, where you put in your 365 days and headed back to The World. It's the spirit of camaraderie — and teamwork — that holds men in combat together. It's also the spirit that keeps an army fit and fighting. Scott knows that as well as anyone and his novel proves it.

Sergeant David Grady, the Ranger Team 2-2 leader, feels the pain of every man's death, and that provides the key to this book. The Vietnam War and its complexities are not at issue here. Scott cares mostly for the men on the pointy end of the bayonet who carried out the instructions that trickled down from the top. Erratic and often uninformed orders from officers behind the lines are certainly a sore point with Scott, and he uses them as the reason why many of his characters are killed. But the life and death of Ranger Team 2-2 in its own small corner of the war is the crux of this novel.

Readers familiar with classic WWII novels — Leon Uris' *Battle Cry* immediately springs to mind — probably remember the cast of stereotypical characters that filled out each platoon. There was the Southern boy, the poor black, the repressed intellectual, the rich kid and the scamming company clerk. They're all here too. Scott's fictional soldiers are obviously ghosts from his past, and while they may conjure up serious memories, they are a refreshing change from the introspective, bitter and cynical characters that haunt the pages of current Vietnam War fiction.

Scott's pen is not as sure as it will undoubtedly become with practice, and it shows in his character development. Their two-dimensional responses to emotional issues are hard to

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believe; their storybook romances with women fated to serve in Vietnam are incredible, but if you can get by these and into the real meat of the story you won't be disappointed with the results.

Scott's **Charlie Mike** almost makes it to the ranks of outstanding war fiction. It zeros in on what it was like to fight in that strange place called Vietnam and, most importantly, it will appeal to any soldier from any war — or no war at all. Pick it up for a good read. ✕

ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

Continued from page 16

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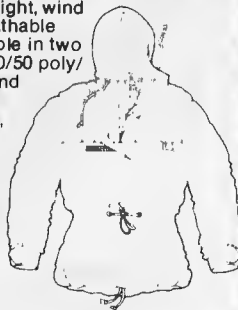
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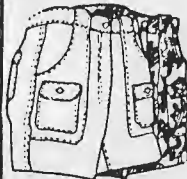
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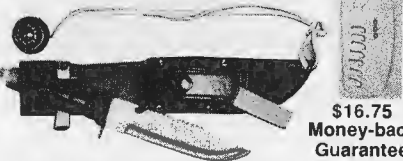
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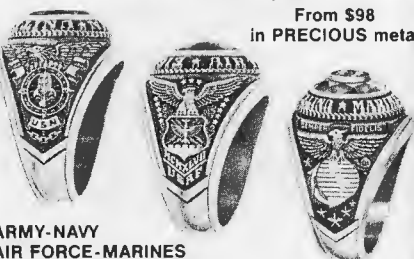
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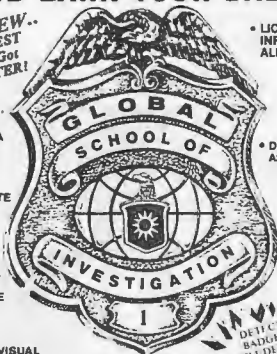
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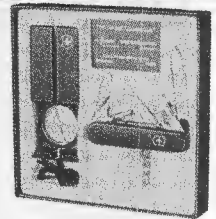
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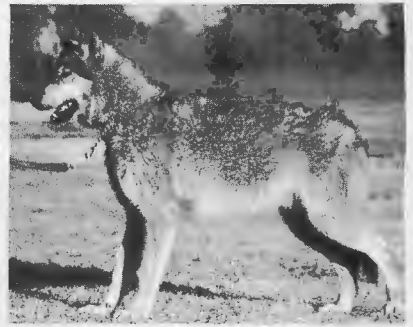
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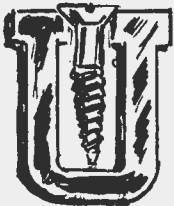
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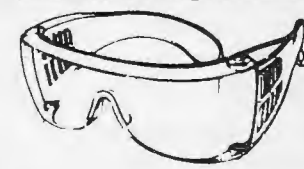
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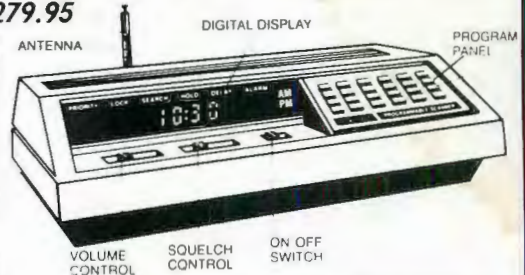
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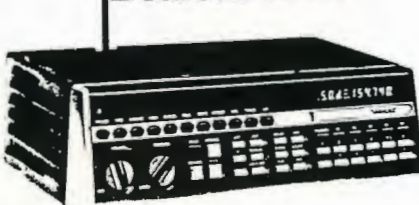


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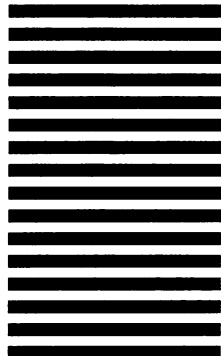
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